

# The Philatelic Communicator

Quarterly Journal of  
Writers Unit 30, American Philatelic Society

Volume 35, Number 1, Whole Number 131

First Quarter 2001

## THE CHALLENGE OF SCANNED GRAPHICS FOR LOW-BUDGET PUBLICATIONS

by Karen Weight

### INTRODUCTION

What's "low-budget"? For purposes of this article, it's a publication with the following criteria:

- black-and-white only
- maximum of 1,000 copies
- camera-ready copy supplied by the editor
- final output on mediocre paper stock
- reproduced on a photocopy machine or typical offset press at a print shop that accepts low-budget jobs

I go back to the days of the typewriter when text margins were approximated to allow space for pasting in the graphics. Whenever possible, real stamps were affixed within those spaces. Sometimes photos or photocopies of the philatelic material were supplied by the author. In all cases, it posed a problem for the editor who could not afford the funds needed to appropriately reproduce those graphics. The result was poor images with extreme contrast: blobs of black within white space and very few gray shades in between. It was due to the lack of converting the graphics to halftones.

The computer age with scanners, laser printers, and desktop publishing and image-editing software has come to the rescue. Before discussing this technology, however, it's helpful to have a better understanding of the concept of halftones, also known as screen ruling, screen frequency or line frequency.

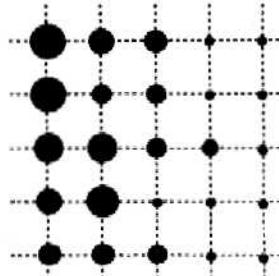
### HALFTONES

Within the print industry, the term "halftone" refers to an image that has been converted to dots by a process of screening. Halftone screening uses variably sized dots aligned in a grid-like manner. The size and placement of the dots allow the press and some newer photocopy machines to simulate color shades. Print shops have long had the ability to perform the screening process through use of a camera, but the procedure adds considerably to reproduction costs.

Screen ruling values are determined by the number of rows or lines per inch (lpi) of halftone dots used to create an image. Graphics depicted in sophisticated magazines have a high line-screen ruling (e.g., 133 to 150 lpi), whereby the variably sized

halftone dots are small and spaced close together. Graphics reproduced in newspapers and other low-budget publications have a low line-screen ruling (60 to 85 lpi). Here, the dots are larger and farther apart and often can be seen with the naked eye. The result is a coarser image.

Regardless of the screen ruling value, the darker areas of an image consist of the larger dots; the lighter areas consist of smaller dots. Together, they create an optical illusion of variations of gray in a black-and-white publication.



Halftone Dots on an Imaginary Grid.

(Reprinted with permission from *Digital Prepress Complete*, p. 286, by Donnie O'Quinn and Matt LeClair, Hayden Books, 201 W. 103<sup>rd</sup> St., Indianapolis, IN 46290.)

### SCANNED GRAPHICS

Scanning reproduces a graphic so it can be placed into a publication through use of computer software. Furthermore, a laser desktop printer will print the graphic as a halftone. An accurate reproduction of the graphic, however, depends on the scan resolution. Resolution is the number of pixels or dots available to represent graphic detail:

- on a computer screen, it's the number of pixels per linear inch (ppi);
- on a scanner, it's the number of pixels read per linear inch of the scanned image;
- on a desktop printer, it's the number of dots printed in a linear inch (dpi).

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# The Philatelic Communicator

ISSN 0147-3646

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Writers Unit 30, APS, publishes *The Philatelic Communicator* four times a year. A subscription to TPC is included with dues paid by members of the Unit.

Manuscripts are solicited on subjects of interest to writers, editors and publishers of all forms of philatelic literature. All submissions for publication, without exception, are subject to being edited. Opinions expressed in *The Philatelic Communicator* are those of their authors, and not necessarily of Writers Unit 30, APS, its officers, editor, publisher or agents. Letters received by the editor may be published unless labeled "Not for Publication." When possible, furnish copy, including letters, on diskettes (WordPerfect 8, RTF or ASCII). Include printed copy with diskettes. All editorial matters must be handled with the editor.

DEADLINES—For receipt of copy by the editor:

First Quarter .....	Jan. 15
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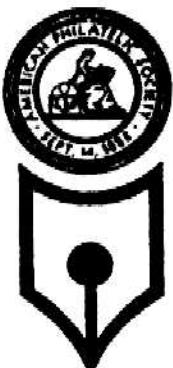
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Writers Unit 30 has as its primary objective the encouragement and improvement of philatelic writing in all of its various forms. Calendar year membership dues, payable in advance in U.S. funds through a U.S. bank or Post Office are:

U.S. Zip code address, bulk rate	\$15.00
Canada & Mexico, 1st class mail	\$17.50

All other, by AO Airmail	\$20.00
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The Philatelic Communicator is printed and distributed by Wilcox Printing & Publishing, Inc., Madrid, Iowa.



# The Quill

Joe Foley

## LITERATURE COMPETITIONS

Literature competitions continue to be of interest to our members as indicated by some of the contents in this issue. There is a difference between the results of literature and stamp competitions. It seems to hold true at both the national and international levels. With the relatively small number of literature entries at the national level, it would be difficult to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between national and international results. Also, there are probably other variables at play which would tend to "cloud" the issue.

My own feeling is that this difference may well be a quite reasonable result. A philatelic exhibit frequently is the outcome of considerable refinement, beginning with that first step of "evolving" from a collection to a first time exhibit. Usually, over time, and with the benefit of critique and advice, not to mention the acquisition of additional significant material, the exhibit is further improved and may earn a high award.

Contrast this with a philatelic book. There are not all that many second or revised editions. The first effort is usually "it." The opportunity for continuous improvement is elusive. Yet, we are fortunate to have some truly outstanding books that do earn high awards. Peter A. S. Smith's *Egypt, Stamps and Postal History, A Philatelic Treatise* is as shining an example of an international large gold as could be wished for. The draft and associated study and research may very well have been as rigorous and as time consuming as a large gold philatelic exhibit. It sets an extremely high standard. Yet large gold philatelic exhibits set equally high standards.

Let's take a look at philatelic periodicals. Here, there is the opportunity for continuous improvement and refinement—putting to advantage the comments and suggestions from judges in a manner very similar to a philatelic exhibit. One limitation that literature and philatelic exhibits may share is money. Just as an individual collector may find that C3a beyond his or her reach, a literature exhibit may face budget restraints. Another factor is the dependence of an editor on authors. Some editors may take a more pro-active role than others in soliciting material, but in the final analysis, all are dependent on what they can obtain. An editor may have great plans for improvement, but the quality of the manuscripts is probably more controlling than anything else.

## GLITZ & GLITTER

A pejorative phrase, but occasionally appropriate. All of us can be distracted by an ostentatious appearance, but only for so long and so far. A pretty frame does little for a poor painting—substance is what counts. Where's the meat? On the other hand, doesn't a substantial work deserve appropriate surrounding? This is somewhat akin to presentation in a philatelic exhibit and should be worth about as much.

There are some rules in philatelic exhibits—many more in literature. If you don't think so, take a look at any good style

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## OKPEX Philatelic Literature Competition - Quo Vadis?

by Joseph Monteiro

The last issue of the *Philatelic Communicator* announced that OKPEX 2001 was shelving its Philatelic Literature competition. This is a setback for the exhibition of literature. Nevertheless, before the coffin is lowered into the grave, perhaps we should ask ourselves if there is something that can be done to raise the corpse.

### THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The decision taken by the OKPEX Committee of the Oklahoma City Stamp Club Committee was motivated by: 1) Costs associated with literature judging, 2) Costs outweighing the effort required, 3) Lack of interest among the Committee members to undertake the task, 4) Lack of need for another Philatelic Literature competition in the US and 5) Failure to build up an interest in a Separate Class of literature exhibition. This decision will certainly be viewed by literature exhibitors negatively in general.

### OKPEX AND LITERATURE COMPETITION

Literature competition at OKPEX is a recent endeavour. Five years ago, when OKPEX first began to introduce literature as part of its Exhibition program, it wrote to me asking me if I was interested in participating. I did and my experience reveals that it has undertaken the task of judging literature very professionally. Over the last eight years I have participated in many literature exhibitions, first National and then in World.

My general observations of OKPEX are: 1) philatelic exhibitions at OKPEX have been very competently undertaken. The brochure is very well done and can be considered on a par with most of the larger Philatelic clubs in the USA. It provides participants with several gifts such as a Certificate of Merit, a commemorative first day cover, etc., 2) the Certificate of Award provided by OKPEX is considered by me the best certificate provided at national exhibitions. It contains a gold embossed seal, a small ribbon, and colour stripes on which the ribbon and seal are placed. In addition, it contains the signature of the three Judges—it creates the feeling of an impressive award, 3) it provides a ribbon with the award which several exhibitions do not, 4) it provides an impressive medal containing the name of the exhibitor and the type of award engraved on a piece of metal affixed on the back of the medal. Many National and World exhibitions do not bother, thus failing to give it a personal touch. I would rather have a medal with my name on it rather than have no identification tag. Fifth, the Critique sheet is a type of standard form used by most US exhibitions. In this regard, I believe that the Critique sheet provided by CAPEX '96 is the best both among National and World exhibitions. It does take a bit longer to spell out in greater detail the strength and weakness of an exhibitor but in doing so it also provides guidance for the future.

### OKPEX AND THE FUTURE

The concerns of the OKPEX Committee raise an issue as to whether the literature exhibition should be dropped. While I agree with many of these, perhaps a less drastic step may have been worth considering. First, the entry fees could be raised. Second, the number of judges and jury could be reduced. Third, voluntary participation by these judges could be sought especially as the number of entrants may not often be very large. Fourth, ways to cut such expenses could be sought, for example using stamps exhibit

judges as literature judges, especially if there are few literature entrants. Fifth, bringing the judges for such shows only on the final day.

It is often difficult to obtain unpaid-voluntary participation by members of a Stamp Club to undertake a job. In one's busy life, it is difficult to squeeze in time for extra undertakings. But I believe that it is an individual's drive and effort that make these undertakings a success. For example, I often get requests to write articles for which no payment is made. I generally comply as these philatelic journals and newspapers need the help to survive or stay in business. While I agree with the Committee that it does take time and effort, I believe that, on balance, the effort outweighs the cost.

It is difficult to assess whether the US needs another philatelic literature exhibition. This is similar to asking whether every city or state should have its own baseball team. If one is more a State man rather than a National man, one will certainly want his own State to have its own show. In sports the matter would certainly have been a touchy issue and even a proposal to sell your City or State's team could raise a considerable degree of controversy. So the answer to this question is one of need but rather one of interest and enthusiasm among stamp collectors in Oklahoma.

The attempt to start literature competition at OKPEX has been an interesting experience for anyone attempting to start something new. I believe that instead of taking such a drastic action to drop literature exhibiting completely, an attempt should have been made to introduce some of the proposals noted above. If some of them are not successful, an attempt should be made to have it once every three or five years. Many national exhibitions do not have a literature competition every year, part of the reason is because they are unable to induce exhibitors to participate. It should be remembered that writing books, catalogues, etc. takes a considerable length of time and after a few years it becomes increasingly more difficult to find new entrants. This is because production of catalogues is particularly sensitive to market conditions, i.e., whether writers or companies producing them can sell these catalogues. The market here is not very good as it is often difficult to find new information to market or stimulate reader interest. This lack or decline of interest in philately can also be seen in the statistics provided in the article by Ken Lawrence in the last issue of the *Philatelic Communicator*.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The decision by the OKPEX Committee to drop its literature competition is a setback for philatelists, particularly the philatelists at Oklahoma City, trying to promote literature at philatelic events. While I am sympathetic to some of their concerns, perhaps a less drastic action should have been considered. Unfortunately, the economic factors at times determine the fate of several undertakings. Perhaps, the OKPEX Committee could consider my proposals and could consider having such a competition at periodic intervals. It is always difficult to start a new and worthwhile project and to ensure that it succeeds indefinitely in the future. Having started one, every effort should be made to keep it going! And perhaps, like Lazarus, the literature competition may rise again rather than be laid to rest. Nevertheless, it is better to have tried and lost than to have never tried at all. □

"drawings" that produce "1-bit bitmaps," another term that's sometimes used.

My 5p, for instance, offers "line art" and "photograph," and that's all it provides for black-and-white work. My old Ilp included a diffusion mode. A laser printout of a diffused grayscale graphic resembles the product of an inkjet printer or good photocopy machine. That is, it has not been automatically line screened. Because some diffused graphics actually look better than halftones, it's an advantage to have this scan option. Without it, I could just use my inkjet, which ignores line screening, but the laser printer is faster and does a superior job when it comes to printing 50 or so copies of a flier.

Even though my camera-ready copy is in black and white, it's sometimes helpful to have the 5p color mode option. While the scanner is taking a closer look at the graphic to record color data, it also is capturing a bit more detail. This creates a larger file, but the color data can be eliminated upon converting the scan to grayscale in an image-editing program. If disk space isn't a problem, it won't hurt to keep the color information. After all, a non-color printer prints only in black no matter what colors appear on the computer screen.

**Resolution Settings:** On my 5p, line art scans at 600 dpi to automatically match my printer resolution. Grayscales scan at 150 dpi, again, looking at my printer resolution and assuming I want a line screen in the 85 range. Changing the resolution involves setting up a phantom printer, which is a hassle and also has its limitations. With the old Ilp, it was I who determined the dpi, making it easy to scan according to someone else's printer specifications or perhaps embark on some experimentation.

**Exposure:** The 5p manual raves about the device's ability to automatically determine the correct exposure. I can somewhat override this intelligence, but not anywhere to my satisfaction. The Ilp let me adjust the exposure precisely to my liking. Underexposed scans are darker; overexposed scans are lighter. I prefer working with a slightly underexposed image as it tends to include more detail. This gives me more options for use in my image-editing program.

**Contrast:** I especially appreciated the contrast adjustment available with the Ilp. At 100 percent, it allowed me to capture the die cuts between two attached self-adhesive stamps. The scan then went to a paint program where the die-cut lines were traced and used to illustrate a variety. With high contrast in the scan, I also could pick up and then enlarge the subtle engraved lines needed for properly identifying some of the Washington-Franklin head issues. The 5p has no contrast adjustment.

**Sharpening:** While the 5p allows some sharpening, it's grossly insufficient.

**Descreening:** The Ilp offered a descreening function, which relates to halftone dots. A particular difficulty arises when trying to scan some prescreened images. The grid of dots causes interference that results in an unsightly checkered pattern. This is called a moiré, and the descreening function helps defeat the problem. It's important to be able to scan a photo or a stamp from a magazine or newsprint publication. Since these publications were produced on a press, all illustrations were halftone screened somewhere along the way. I can't explain why

the problem isn't consistent. Although I pick up moirés on some grayscales and colored images, others scan superbly. I've never had a problem with postage stamps, which are also products of a press. Perhaps it's the screen angles used for color; perhaps it's that the screens are so fine, that my scanner can't detect them.

There are a couple of techniques for overcoming a moiré without the help of a descreener. The first is to try scanning the image at a slight angle. The other is to place coins on the scanner bed. Set the graphic on the coins positioned so the image can be fully exposed. For a large piece, be sure there is no sagging in the middle. The technique slightly raises the image off the glass so the scan is thrown a bit out of focus. In both instances, an image-editing software program is needed to either straighten the scanned image or bring it into focus.

**Scaling:** One function of the 5p that works like a charm is the scaling option, and this is important for bitmap images. Bitmaps represent a fixed number of pixels. They, therefore, are very resolution-dependent and cannot withstand more than 20 percent scaling of the original scan, either up or down. Increasing the size makes each pixel larger; reducing the size makes each pixel smaller. The result, respectively, is jagged large images and muddy small images. This applies to both grayscale and line-art bitmaps. They also lose detail if they were scanned at a low resolution and then enlarged or printed at a higher resolution. Sometimes, excessive reduction creates that ugly moiré pattern. The problem is with the fixed number of dots per inch in the image that cannot be evenly distributed throughout the number of dots per inch of the printer. The printer tries to make the image fit by adding or skipping rows of dots. It's important, therefore, to always try to scan the image as close as possible to final production size.

Although some image-editing software programs can resize with some degree of accuracy, I prefer to simply rescan if I should change my mind about the final output size. If a scaling option is not available, the following formula can be used to calculate the appropriate scan resolution:

$$FI = OI \times HSR \times 1.5$$

Where:

FI — final image height or width

OI — original image height or width

HSR — halftone screen ruling

## CHECKING THE SCAN BED

It's not unusual to encounter varying scan results within different areas of the scan bed, and the edges are particular culprits. To test the bed, try scanning a full sheet of high quality, uniformly colored paper. Perform the scan in the scanners best color mode with all software settings at their defaults. Take a look at the scan image on the computer screen, preferably within an image-editing program that offers a feature for inspecting tones. The dark, splotchy areas are places to avoid on the scan bed; the clean, consistent areas are where the scanner is processing correctly.

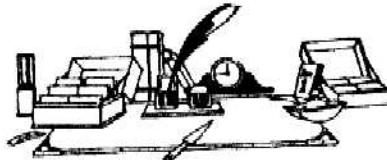
## DESKTOP PRINTERS

**PostScript:** As previously stated, a 600 dpi printer is the

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## President's Message

by Dr. Dane S. Claussen



Much space has been devoted in *The Philatelic Exhibitor*, journal of the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors, to the July 2000 *TPE*'s publication (and its aftermath) of a letter from Robert L. Smith that attacked the VENPEX 2000 jury. WU30 past president Robert de Violini, Richard S. Willing, and Wallace A. Craig, each targeted by Smith's letter, responded at length in the October 2000 *TPE*.

The issue primarily has been whether John Hotchner, who has been *TPE*'s editor since its founding nearly 15 years ago, was "derelict" and "negligent" (in de Violini's words) in not giving Smith's three targets an opportunity to respond in the same issue. (For the record, I've known and respected John Hotchner for a long time; I also know de Violini but do not know Smith, Willing or Craig.)

My take on this is: it all depends. In other words, what standards and practices an editor follows with regard to letters to the editor is and should be pretty much left up to him or her—as long as he/she follows them consistently and takes the consequences both for following them consistently and anytime he/she doesn't follow them. I haven't heard or read anything yet that tells me whether Hotchner's decision to run the Smith letter without a response from de Violini, Willing and/or Craig was or was not contrary to his explicit policy and/or his usual practices (in the absence of a policy, an implicit one).

In most ways, that should be the major question: did Hotchner treat Smith any differently than he has any other letter writer throwing allegations around, and did Hotchner treat de Violini, Willing and Craig any differently than he has other targets of attack in letters to the editor? If Hotchner has opted in the past not to print letters like that from Smith, and then published this one, de Violini, Willing and Craig have a legitimate personal complaint.

If Hotchner has obtained responses from persons attacked in letters to the editor to publish simultaneously with the offending letter, and didn't do that this

time, then de Violini, Willing and Craig have a legitimate personal complaint. But if Hotchner treated all four of them the same as he has others in their situations in the past, one could criticize his policy/practice but not his handling of this particular letter. And I think that consistently following a practice/policy is particularly important in organized philately, in which a significant percentage of participants seem to have memories like elephants regarding slights (perceived or real), hypocrisy, and change.

How could Hotchner's decision, under a policy or on a case-by-case basis, to run Smith's letter without responses from de Violini, Willing and Craig be defended? Quite easily, in fact. After double-checking, I know of no nationally recognized policy or standard among journalists for dealing with letters to the editor. Developing such policies on a publication-by-publication basis, and perhaps nationwide model standards, is in fact a current topic of discussion on the members-only "shop talk" *listserv* hosted by the National Conference of Editorial Writers.

Some editors in Hotchner's shoes would have not run the letter at all, due to the attacks in it, the constant of space limitations in printed publications, being a topic probably only of local interest, or if he/she deemed the letter uninteresting, out of date, poorly written, and so on. Even assuming that a decision is made to publish such a letter, most editors' practices/policies prohibit themselves or anyone else from replying in print to letters to the editor.

Magazines such as *Atlantic Monthly*, which publish long responses from their contributing writers who have been criticized, are unusual in this regard. Editors—including my mentor Ken Wood—justify not publishing responses with comments such as, "the article writer and his/her sources already have had their say, let the readers have theirs"—especially if the publication receives a lot more letters to the editor than it has space for. But of course in Smith's case, he wasn't criticizing

Hotchner or another *TPE* writer, but using *TPE* as a forum to attack de Violini Willing and Craig. The questions then become whether they have put themselves in a kitchen and should be able to handle the heat (i.e., philatelic "public figures," to borrow a term from libel law), and what kind of precedent should be set.

The first half of that question is problematic: we often try to act like philately is just one big family, with space in its publications for all letters to the editor and an obligation to obtain a response from all those attacked. But consistently doing that could quickly become absurd what if *Linn's* receives 100 letters containing seven different complaints about two members of the APS board? Should *Linn's* seek no response from the two APS board members, one response from each even though they probably can't or wouldn't read all 100 letters, a response from one or both in each of the seven areas of concern, or 100 responses—one for each letter writer?

The second half of my question about what kind of precedent is set, also is messy. Over nearly 15 years as editor Hotchner has demonstrated his interest in publishing a large number and variety of letters to the editor, so perhaps not publishing Smith's letter would have been unusual. But Hotchner could have told Smith anyway that editors don't and usually can't publish all letters (and that surely even Hotchner hasn't published every letter he's ever received), and that Smith was especially welcome to resubmit the letter if he had more evidence for his allegations.

Unfortunately, Hotchner may have set a bad precedent by publishing the Smith letter, and—I think—set an even worse precedent in publishing an apology and three relatively long responses from de Violini, Willing and Craig in response to their complaints about Smith's letter. Why? Because now anyone who thinks he or she has been even vaguely slandered by a story or letter to the editor in *TPE* will feel entitled to extract from Hotchner an apology and a lot of space for a response.

Hotchner may have avoided a battle

with Smith by publishing his letter, but by surrendering to de Violini, Willing and Craig on such generous terms (unless under legitimate threat of well-founded litigation), he may have lost the constant "cold war" editors fight to retain control of their own publications' content.

Finally, if you think I've overcomplicated the subject of letters to the editor, I haven't even started. Some editors publish no letters that are critical of their publications because they don't have to and think it does them no good (and perhaps harm), while other editors publish a lot of critical letters to show humility or that they are democratic. Yet other editors publish a "token" critical letter—especially if the problem is being corrected, or the complaining letter writer is famous—to simultaneously admit and underemphasize reader complaints.

Editors also must decide whether to put length limits on letters to the editor, set frequency limits (such as only one letter per month or per quarter or per year, per person), set language limits (such as no vulgarity), set originality requirements (the same letter cannot have been sent to more than one mass medium at a time, and letters that are photocopied or are "boilerplate" from interest groups are automatically rejected), and decide whether they will or will not edit letters for length, clarity, or relevance (perhaps part of a letter is interesting to the publication's readers and part of it is not).

For instance, my recent (short) published letters to the editor of the Wall Street Journal and Editor & Publisher magazine were not edited for length or content, while my letter to the Sunday New York Times Magazine was edited for length. And, yes, those of us who have been philatelic editors know that, just like "real" newspapers and magazines, our hobby is not immune from two- and three-page, single-spaced letters to the editor.

Editors must decide—such as in my hypothetical (but not impossible) example of 100 letters to Linn's about the APS board—whether their letters to the editor should be balanced (say 50% of letters "pro" and 50% "con") on an issue, even though 80% of readers feel "pro" and only 20% "con." representative of readers (80% "pro" letters and 20% "con" letters), or

representative of writers (which is usually not the same percentage split as among readers).

Editors also must decide whether to give preference to important writers of letters to the editor; topics relevant to readers that the publication itself hasn't covered yet; and exceedingly well written and/or humorous letters (and we know that virtually all U.S. newspapers and magazines could use more humor). Publishing letters to the editor may seem like just a mechanical process—one opens up the mail (or email) and simply prints what one gets—but it isn't. □

## THE PHILATELIC EDITOR AS A CENSOR

by Brian J. Birch

I was somewhat surprised to read Ken Trettin's article "The Use of Non-philatelic Titles and Honors in Philatelic Publications" in the Second Quarter 2000 issue of *The Philatelic Communicator*. It would appear that Ken is determined to eliminate all non-philatelic and indeed philatelic (except for RDP) titles and honors from the American Revenue Association's publications. This, on the grounds that they have "no bearing on the philatelic worth of an article."

It seems to me that Ken has missed completely, two essential truths: 1. The author and the author alone has the right to determine the style of name and any appendages thereto that he chooses to use. For an editor to take to himself the right to interfere with this choice is censorship, not editorial prerogative. This topic was ably dealt with by Joe Foley on the same page as Ken's contribution and need not be raised again here. 2. Names are simply a means of differentiating between different people. In the innocence of my youth, I was happy to publish my scientific articles under the name B. Birch. As I began to use and eventually compile bibliographies and indexes in both my real and philatelic worlds, I soon realized that I was not the only Birch and that there was a one in twenty-six chance that any other Birch would be a B. Birch. By adding my second initial, J. (John), it decreased this chance of confusion to one in 676. Giving my first name in full hopefully diminished this to one in some hundreds of thousands or so. (However, judging by how our Editor dealt with Ken Trettin and Joe Foley, perhaps

this will come out as Bri Birch in the *Communicator*.)

My move some years ago to Brian J. Birch as my by-line is my legacy of clarity to those who might analyze today's publications when they become historical documents, just as I do with nineteenth Century philatelic publications where in too many instances only second names or even initials were used. Only those who compile indexes or biographies realize fully the problems caused by short names. Interestingly, Ken seems to have completely accepted the differentiation argument by openly permitting membership labels to be addressed exactly as the author requires in order to "get the journal delivered to the reader [because] that title may be needed." Perversely, he is determined to increase his diligence in removing these very titles from the society's Membership List, the purpose of which is surely to facilitate correspondence between members.

In Ken's second example of Jane Doe, he unwittingly highlights the problem researchers can have in identifying people unequivocally. At a distance in time, when all of the protagonists may be dead, how can I determine that Jane Doe, Miss J. Doe, J. Doe, Mrs. J. Doe and Mrs. John Doe are all the same person. Perish the thought that husband John is also a philatelist or that I am expected to realize that Jane's maiden name was Smith!

Finally, I was simply stunned that Ken admitted in his final paragraph that his guidelines (= rules) were unwritten. Changing documents by stealth is simply censorship. I recommend that Ken publishes his guidelines: The Editor will determine the by-line under which your contribution will be published. I wonder how many contributors would then submit their articles elsewhere. □

## DOCUMENT RETENTION

Drafts and manuscripts will usually be retained for approximately ninety days after the issue in which the article, etc., appears is published. Correspondence will normally be discarded after approximately six months. □

Journalism is literature in a hurry.

—Matthew Arnold

## Comments on Literature Competition

by Bob Rawlins

I entered my society periodical in the APS Literature Competition at Stampshow 2000 and attended the WU30 breakfast. I was absolutely amazed to hear Dr. Dixon's comments calling for a review of literature competition exhibit regulations. I was even more amazed to read the full text of the white paper in 3QTPC which I did not receive until December 23rd, the first issue evidently "lost in the bottom of a mailbag."

I believe that my experience with literature competitions is relevant to the subject. I took over editorship of my society monthly (*USCS Log*, part newsletter, part journal) twelve years ago, a minimally experienced editor to be sure. The publication needed serious help, and my first action was to include a questionnaire in the annual dues mailing to the membership. I had an astounding 50% response with many excellent suggestions. I summarized those in subsequent issues and began to implement improvements issue by issue. A friend and member of WU30 suggested I join, which I did. After the first year, my friend suggested that I enter the *Log* in a literature competition for professional comment. I submitted the second volume that I had edited, and continued to do so at two year intervals.

So, my reasons for entering my society newsletter in literature competitions using Dr. Dixon's white paper criteria were: (b) promote sales (memberships), (e) advertising the society through its periodical, and an additional item which I'll add to Dr. Dixon's list, (f) to obtain an outside view and professional writer's comments. In retrospect, I am not aware of any memberships obtained by this means (we do keep careful track) so reasons (b) and (e) were pretty much of a bust.

Overall, I did receive some excellent comments for improvement from APS literature judges which I carefully implemented; thus, reason (f) was a positive for me. I realize that I could have utilized the WU 30 critique service, but felt that a review by a group plus the possibility of publicity for my society was reason to go the literature competition route. I expect that, had I taken the former course, I would not be writing this paper.

Along about year six, it dawned on me that, despite the many improvements which I had implemented, the medal level remained unchanged. I made it a practice to attend the shows in which my previous year's volume was entered in competition, and always attended the judges' critique. I looked at the journals on display which had been given higher medal levels and analyzed the palmares. I finally came to the conclusion that the judging standards favored books over periodicals and book-like journals over newsletters. I submitted a number of articles to TPC arguing this point, with some support, but total resistance from those who pull the strings of the APS judging regulations. By the end of my 11th year, when I turned the editorship over to another society member, I was frankly disenchanted with the judging regulations for literature competition. Had I continued my editorship, I doubt that I would have bothered entering another literature competition. You can't roll water uphill.

In his paper, Dr. Dixon's concluded that the awards

distribution for literature exhibits is about right and that c stamp (and cover) exhibits is skewed too far to the left, with too many gold and vermeil awards. I can't agree. Doctor Dixon has not taken account of the repetition factor. Many top level exhibits are repeaters with the exhibitor apparently seeking the best in show award in a number of venues. Other exhibits start at one medal level but progress as the exhibitor attends the critique, obtains new material, revises pages, and upgrades the exhibit continuously, eventually reaching the pinnacle for the subject. The article by Nick Lombardi on page 12 of the October 2000 *Philatelic Exhibitor* is an example of improvement in repetitive showings, but not a unique one. I have often heard a judge comment on improvements in an exhibit made "since the previous showing." Further, excellent advice on exhibiting abounds to help an exhibitor rapidly ascend the medal ladder if the material is there. When societies convene at stamp shows members often pull out the stops and have a fierce competitor for the society's awards. Finally, exhibit chairs who need exhibits to fill frames generally try to pull in top exhibits rather than "also rans."

While, it's true that a particular book or periodical volume can't be similarly upgraded, comments and suggestions made at a critique or by other means can be factored into succeeding volumes. In my experience, however, those improvements have not seemed to be noticed or considered by literature juries. I have heard a jury member say to me or someone at every literature critique "Well-silver is a very good award." Poppycock. The regulations are a hurdle to be sure, but I think that literature juries are simply parsimonious with awards.

Here, I want to emphasize that a vermeil or gold medal was not my primary goal. One jury member noted that I should aim to please my membership rather than the literature jury. There was no question about that. But, having worked hard to make the *Log* more professional and, at the same time, more interesting, useful, and enjoyable to the membership, it was frustrating to not see commensurate acknowledgment by literature juries.

### FUTURE

Concerning whether or not literature competitions should be continued, my answer is:

**Yes**, if the committee and CANEJ can display the flexibility and imagination to provide separate regulations for the various categories of philatelic literature. Books, monographs, catalogs, journals, newsletters, columns, and web sites should all have both a general and category specific judging criteria, but,

**No**, especially if the current FIP regulations are to continue to apply to APS literature competitions.

However, there is value in the FIP aim to "demonstrate the state of development of philately in all of its various fields," and I support the idea of displaying philatelic literature at stamp shows even if the competition idea is abandoned.

The October 2000 *Philatelic Exhibitor* contains a proposal to establish two new divisions to philatelic exhibits recognizing that exhibiting is dynamic, not static. I salute that initiative and wonder why philatelic literature exhibiting has been so long stuck in the mud. I had absolutely no interest in entering the *Log* in the international competition arena, and I imagine that many, probably most, periodical editors feel the same. Why then must we be saddled with a one-size-fits-all standard for each and every literature category?

Dr. Dixon discusses a potential problem of awards with separate competitive categories. I agree that a competition should have one grand award and that each category should have a "best in class" award. Tight budgets can be eased by discontinuing the small level medals which are handed out and, instead, providing a well-designed certificate of quality parchment. Who needs all those gewgaws anyway?

#### EVALUATION

Assuming that various categories of philatelic literature exhibits will, as a result of this study, be given their own guidelines, I offer the following commentary.

The second area of evaluation of literature competitions is titled "Originality, Significance, Depth of Research, (40%)" This section is appropriate to books, monographs, auction catalogs, and some periodicals, but definitely not to all. This is the one section which will require serious revision for evaluation of periodicals.

A. Originality is certainly desirable in reference volumes. It's great to have a previously unexplored area nicely documented. However, that requirement seems not to be appropriate to all periodicals. I have published original research in the *USCS Log*, but the publication is primarily contemporaneous. Original research should be a plus factor for a periodical, but not necessarily a key one as the evaluation criteria title would imply.

B. I have a real problem with the concept of philatelic significance (importance) discussed in several places in Chapter 14 of the *APS Manual of Philatelic Judging*, 4th ed. On page 39 (General Principles) "In the first place, the significance and importance of a piece of literature cannot be seen from the outside." On page 40 (Evaluation Criteria), item 2. "Originality, significance, and depth of research, 40%" On page 41 (The Judging Process) "Significance has to be evaluated in terms of the role of that piece of literature in the overall philatelic program." What bothers me is that a determination of significance is highly subjective.

Which is more significant, pollution of the waters of Tomales Bay or clear cutting of old growth redwood groves in northern California? Well, it depends whether you're an oyster or a western spotted owl, an oysterman or a lumberman, a diner, a salesman of wood products or an environmentalist. Each will have its/his own subjective view. In literature competition, traditional philatelic subjects clearly get the significant nod. In practice, I am convinced that periodicals of the many APS affiliates on the fringes of traditional stamp collecting are viewed as second class citizens, i.e., not philatelically significant. I expect committee members will think I'm whining. I'm not. I'm relating actual experience. Lack of

"significance" means one medal level lower.

Along this same line, it is my belief that periodicals with "non-traditional" (specialty) subject matter do not seem to be given as serious consideration as are those of traditional philately. In two competitions, my publication was criticized for identical items which, upon examination, I found to have been totally ignored in journals of traditional subjects. In other words, a subjective standard of "importance" was included in the evaluation mix. This may well have been an unconscious application by jury members, but one which stems from inclusion of "significance" as a mandatory feature of literature competition. This acts as a means of downgrading specialty collecting areas in which some judges do not have an especially high regard. If my specialty cover exhibits can earn a gold in APS CofC competition, why should a periodical in the same area be considered but second class? After all, there are more than 200 APS affiliates with most representing specialty societies or study groups.

C. Depth of Research again seems more a major criterion for books, monographs, catalogs, and some periodicals, but not all. True, certain journals are totally devoted to research subjects, but give the rest of us a break. The *USCS Log* has been devoted to roughly equal amounts of news, features, and advertising and services. Short feature articles serve a very useful purpose, e.g., covering a limited area of knowledge, presenting a summary of a subject, or piquing a reader's interest for further, detailed research in the subject. Give us credit for what we are doing but without an arbitrary and idealized standard.

#### SUGGESTIONS

For periodicals, I can suggest some items to definitely be considered as evaluation criteria. Every periodical has, or should have, a masthead and/or a banner which outlines the purpose of the publication. A key criteria should be how well the editor has carried out or achieved the stated purpose(s). What is the degree of member participation in the publication as opposed to the quantity of editor prepared items? Is there dialog between officers and members and between members and editor? How extensive are the services provided to the membership? Does the publication have material equally useful to new, intermediate, and experienced members? Do the members get full value for their dues?

These may seem to be esoteric considerations, as opposed to philatelic, but they are ones which do contribute to the success of the publication. Every year, *Linn's Stamp News* publishes the subscriber figures for major philatelic publications. While there have been occasional, but inconsistent, individual gains over the past five or so years, the total number of subscribers has declined. In contrast, the USCS membership has held steady, saw toothed between 1400 and 1500 members annually over that time period. Two years ago, one literature juror commented favorably on the breadth and depth of material in the *Log*, noting that one issue of the *Log* contained more information than many quarterly journals. Another noted the large number of members (in excess of 10%) who contributed to that volume (not unusual). When I turned over the files to the



new editor last December, I gave him 15 months of major feature articles (five or more pages in length). That backlog is no less today. Our dues are quite low (\$16/year) and have been unchanged for years. The *Log* cost to our members is about 4 cents per printed page (12 monthly issues of 32 pages each). I doubt that many specialty publications can even equal that figure, much less, better it. While all these trivia are not considered in competition, I think it certainly bears consideration. My experience is that members want the maximum bang for their subscription buck. After all, if a publication is not supportive of its organization or supported by its membership, it will ultimately fail. The fact that it is supported and thriving should count for something.

One year, I submitted a synopsis with the *Log* volume, hoping to explain some of that which I've discussed above. Unfortunately, that did not fly and I did not try it again. However, I commend consideration of a synopsis to the committee. That document has proven very effective in philatelic exhibits; why should it not be equally valuable in literature competitions? At the very least, it would allow an editor to point out the strong points of the publication, some of which the jury might otherwise overlook or ignore.

I don't see much point in having a literature competition for books. Most books are a one shot deal; only a small percentage will be revised or reissued. Authors normally send their book to various reviewers who then print a review in appropriate philatelic publications. For the most part, a book review spells, in some detail, the book's value as a reference source to a potential user. To me, a good review in *Linn's* by, say Richard Graham, will do more to convince me to purchase the volume than a gold medal in the APS literature competition. I quickly purchased Wawrukiewicz and Beecher's books on postal history rates because of enthusiastic reviews, not because the books received the top award in some later literature competitions. It's nice that the books were so recognized, but the authors already knew they had an exceptional product. It's interesting that the domestic rate book, published in 1994, was revised and reissued within five years, triple in size and content. Did that occur because of incisive comments by a literature jury or because users and the authors recognized the need? I'd bet the latter. If the committee decrees that competition in books is to be continued, then I'd recommend that entries be evaluated, along with the usual technical aspects, according to the potential value to a user in that specialty.

The critique for my entry in the August APS Stampshow arrived in this week's mail. The standardized sheet had four main sections mirroring those in the APS Judging Manual. I'll close this diatribe with my thoughts on selected items.

1. Treatment of Contents (Authorship). This section is, of course, generic to all forms of philatelic literature. However,
  - a. what does "best for means available" mean?
  - b. "balance"--- of what? Seems to be a holdover from stamp exhibits.
  - c. "flow" -- of what? The entire publication? Individual articles? Same comment as b.

***Delete this meaningless jargon.***

2. Originality, Significance, Depth of Research (Philatelic)

- a. Improvements - over what?
- b. definitive work - quite appropriate to books; less so to periodicals.

3. Technical matters. This is pretty much across the board, But,
  - a. explanation of arrangement - OK for books, not needed for periodicals
  - b. innovations - more mumbo-jumbo
  - c. treatment of ads is hardly a philatelic requirement. In fact, I find the huge numbers of ads in many specialty publications annoying. I know ads pay the bills, but they do not aid attractiveness of layout.
4. Presentation - Also across the board. But,
  - a. "distracting features" why not "attractive features?"

At the conclusion of his white paper, Dr. Dixon noted that a portion of the philatelic community sees no virtue in changing the system. My concern is that various members of the committee, old timers all, may have one or both feet in that camp. For the committee members who see no reason to change, riddle me this. Where is it written that the FIP rules are the very best way to go in literature competitions? Where is it written that the APS cannot go its own way just as it appears to be poised to do in philatelic exhibits? Where is it written that the one size fits all approach is the very best scheme that can be devised?

If the committee cannot approach this subject with a completely open mind, then this whole exercise will have been one of futility. At the very least, editors of periodicals deserve a level competitive playing field, which is most certainly not the case today. And, if we are not to revisit this arena again in the next decade, please remember that, just as there are many shades of grey, not all periodicals are equivalent in purpose. □

## **Literature Exhibition Calendar**

Coordinators of Literature Exhibitions are encouraged to submit full information, including a prospectus, for these listings. Please contact the editor well in advance of the closing date for entries.

### **March 9-11, 2001**

COLOPEX, Columbus, Ohio, Greater Columbus Convention Center. Includes electronic media. Entries have closed. Information & prospectus from: Harold E. Wilson, 4092 Virginia Circle East, Whitehall, OH 43213, phone (614) 237-3672, e-mail: [ruwilson@ix.netcom.com](mailto:ruwilson@ix.netcom.com)

### **August 23-6, 2001**

A.P.S. STAWSHOW, Chicago, Ill. For information contact Ken Martin, APS, Box SM, State College, PA 16803, phone 814 237-3803, fax 814 237-6128, e-mail: [kpmartin@stamps.org](mailto:kpmartin@stamps.org)

### **November 16-18, 2001**

CHICAGOPEX 2001, Rosemont, IL. Includes journals, handbooks, auction catalogs, articles. For information contact Kevin Doyle, 5815 Lenox Road, Lisle, IL 60532; phone 630 968-0169; e-mail: [kdoyle@lucent.com](mailto:kdoyle@lucent.com)

### **2002**

Chester 2002, entry fee £15. Information from Michael Birks, 36 Trevor Road, Flixton, Manchester M41 5QK England, e-mail: [mpbirks@36trevor.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:mpbirks@36trevor.freeserve.co.uk) □

## Espana 2000 in Madrid from October 6 to October 14, 2000

by Joseph Monteiro

The third major Philatelic event in Europe in 2000 after Stamp Show in London and WIPA in Vienna was Espana 2000. It took place in Madrid during the first and second weeks of October. Espana 2000 was the ninth Worldwide Philatelic Exhibition hosted in Spain since 1975. This event commemorated the celebration of the issuance of the first Spanish stamp, one hundred and fifty years ago.

Madrid, the capital of Spain, is one of the most picturesque and historic places in this country. The museums, historic buildings and modern range of theatres, cinemas, festival halls and discotheques balance and blend the old and the new aspects of this city.

### PHILATELIC LITERATURE AND PHILATELIC EXHIBITS AT ESPANA 2000

There were one hundred and seventy seven literature entries and six hundred and nine philatelic exhibits. The awards received by the entrants are shown in Table 1. The literature awards peaked at silver bronze. For philatelic exhibits the awards reached a peak at large vermeil. If the awards are plotted for literature, the results would appear as a gradual rise to the large vermeil, a slight decline, then a continuous rise past the large vermeil level to a silver bronze and thereafter a sharp fall. [beginning at large gold and ending at certificates—Ed.]

Since the awards were not published by class of literature entry, statistics on the subject matter are not available. As a result, all the classes - handbooks, periodicals, articles, etc. are grouped together.

### A COMPARISON OF LITERATURE AND PHILATELIC EXHIBITION AWARDS AT ESPANA 2000

Table 1-A Comparison of Literature and Philatelic Exhibition Awards at Espana 2000

Type of Award	Literature	Philatelic Exhibition
Large Gold	1 (0.56%)	35 (5.7%)
Gold	8 (4.5%)	105 (17.2%)
Large Vermeil	25 (14.1%)	129 (21.2%)
Vermeil	17 (9.6%)	127 (20.8%)
Large Silver	30 (17.0%)	100 (16.4%)
Silver	39 (22.0%)	59 (9.7%)
Silver Bronze	40 (22.6%)	36 (5.9%)
Bronze	14 (7.9%)	18 (3.0%)
Certificate of Participation	3 (1.7%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>177 (100%)</b>	<b>609 (100.0%)</b>

Source: Compiled from *Exposición Mundial de Filatelia Espana 2000, Palmarés*, October 6-14, 2000.

A comparison of the performance of literature exhibitors and philatelic exhibitors are shown in Table 1. While only five percent made it to the top (large gold and gold) in literature as many as 22.9 percent made it to the top in philatelic exhibitions. These results speak for themselves. As far as large vermeil and vermeil awards are concerned, the percentages in both categories literature and philatelic exhibitions are 23.7 percent versus 42 percent, respectively.

These results indicate that the chances of going to the top are far better in philatelic exhibiting than in literature. This holds true whether one defines the top as gold or gold and vermeil. One should not draw any other implications from these statistical facts as to whether it is easier or harder to get to the top in one type of competition or the other.

### THE COUNTRIES THAT PERFORMED THE BEST AT PHILATELIC LITERATURE

The Countries that fared the best in literature at Espana 2000 were: Spain, Italy, USA, Canada, Brazil, Norway and Germany. Spain and Italy won nearly half the total awards. Further, Spain did unusually well scoring 19 of the 52 top awards or 37 percent.

A factor in Spain's success is that a large number of entries were from Spain and the other countries did not have such a large number. Another consideration is that the Spanish entries were very good. It does not reflect any biases in literature judging.

### A FEW CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conclusion, Espana 2000 has lived up to the reputation of the past. It was an excellent show and the awards were also quite impressive. □

## HAFNIA '01 World Philatelic Exhibition October 16-21, 2001

by Joseph Monteiro

HAFNIA '01 World Philatelic Exhibition organized by the Danish Philatelic Federation in co-operation with Post Denmark will be held in Copenhagen between October 16 and October 21, 2001. This Exhibition is under Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP) Patronage. It marks the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Denmark's first stamp, the 4 Rigsbank Skilling, issued on April 1, 1851. It will include a philatelic literature exhibition.

The literature exhibition will consist of four Classes: 3A) Philatelic pamphlets, books and studies issued after January 1, 1996; 3B) Philatelic journals, periodicals (a complete annual publication) columns and articles (selection of at least 10 different articles), issued after 1st January 1998; 3C) Philatelic catalogues issued after 1st January 1998, and; 3D) Philatelic computer programs. This class is devoted to philatelic software designed for use in IBM, Apple Macintosh or computers compatible to those. These could be inventory programs, data bases, or page preparation on diskettes or CD-ROM.

The Exhibition will be held in Bella Centre, Scandinavia's largest trade fair, trade mart and congress center. The Centre has hosted HAFNIA World Philatelic Exhibitions in 1976, 1984 and 1994. Access to the Centre is facilitated by a rail service directly to it.

[Editor's note: Further information is available from the HAFNIA Website: [www.hafnia01.dk](http://www.hafnia01.dk). Also, the APS Website includes a section on FIP shows: [www.stamps.org/directories/dir\\_intlShows.htm](http://www.stamps.org/directories/dir_intlShows.htm). According to this site, entries for BELGICA, PHILANIPPON and HAFNIA have closed. JEF]

## PHLNDX

by Ernest E. Fricks

Somewhat over a decade ago it became apparent (to me at any rate) that a comprehensive guide to philatelic journal literature was needed. The immediate impetus was my need to find references to bolster my exhibit judging capability. The first effort consumed my own periodical holdings and about 6,000 3x5 index cards. Soon the enormity of the number of publications warranted purchase of a personal computer and the generation of a database.

Today that effort, called *PHLNDX*, stands at almost 125,000 entries and growing. *PHLNDX* primarily covers publications of the past ten years and mostly those in English. However, neither of these bounds is absolute as publications in several languages with Latin-based alphabets make their appearance. The database also includes books and other one-time publications although to a lesser extent than the periodicals.

About five years ago, as the American Philatelic Research Library (APRL) began to assemble its holdings database, I offered *PHLNDX* to Gini Horn, Director of Library Services, so that a more complete database could be offered to the philatelic community. If you consult their Website, [http://www.stamps.org/TheLibrary/lib\\_ArticleIndex.htm](http://www.stamps.org/TheLibrary/lib_ArticleIndex.htm) you will find the database divided into such fields as TOPIC, TITLE, AUTHOR, JOURNAL (or PUBLICATION) title, volume, number, month and year. Several years after beginning the effort, I showed the effort to one of our members whose only comment in print was that it lacked page numbers. Page numbers, where these can be determined, are now included in the article title.

Updates of about 2,000 entries are periodically provided to Gini for posting to the site. At one point in my career, I traveled extensively. My colleagues wondered why my suitcase always included copies of various philatelic journals. My evenings were (and are) spent adding to the database.

Richard Riley commented that the effort would take two man-lives to complete. I'm not certain that it is "completable." Currently, I am working on the *American Journal of Philately, Second Series*, as well as today's publications; the *AJP* is slow going. It is also important if you want access to the early writings of John Luff or want to know where much of the early stuff in the *Scott Catalogue* came from. The effort is also expensive. My wife tells me I spend a couple of thousand dollars a year buying publication subscriptions and runs of old periodicals. A few of the current periodicals help by providing tables of contents or synopses of articles but most editors that I have asked to assist have not responded. This adds to the time and expense.

Many years ago, Ricketts undertook a similar task. Limited by technology, he produced a body of work that is difficult to use. In many cases, I have had to recover the same ground that he ploughed. We have investigated how to capture Ricketts' information in a time-efficient manner; at the moment, the electronic file that resulted in the *PLR* is among the missing. Ricketts became discouraged and eventually ceased work after taking his results to a meeting at the Collectors Club in New

York only to be disparaged. Last year, one of our members told me that he couldn't understand why anyone would attempt to do *PHLNDX*. Not everyone sees value in such an effort.

A shortcut might be to include databases that have already been assembled. Mr. Riley's revenue database is a case in point. However, I have been cautioned that to do so might infringe on the authors' or publishers' copyrights. So, we are back to using the original publications. At about 12,000 entries per year, in a decade the database should have about 200,000.

Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* had the great university library on Trantor. All knowledge was captured in that library's database. Perhaps someday, philately will have something similar. □

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The odd-numbered years are election years for WU#30. The Bylaws (Article IV, Section 3) states: "Members wishing to run for office may make themselves known to the nominating committee or may run for office by petition of the membership. Such nominations by petition shall be made with the support and signatures of at least ten (10) members in good standing. Such nomination by petition shall be sent to the secretary-treasurer not later than the second Monday in May of each odd-numbered year."

Officers and those members of the Council of the Class of 2001 may seek reelection. Positions to be filled in the election shall include president, vice president east, vice president west, secretary-treasurer, and not less than three nor more than eight members of the Council. The terms of office for Council members Ernest E. Fricks, Augustine Serafini, and Charles J. G. Verge are expiring this year; in addition, a member will be elected to fill the seat of the late Russell V. Skavaril.

Those interested in running for office or for the Council should write secretary George Griffenhagen, 2501 Drexel Street, Vienna, VA 22180, or by e-mail at [gbg@mail.aphanet.org](mailto:gbg@mail.aphanet.org). President Dane S. Clausen will be appointing a chairperson of the Nominations Committee at which time all notifications of those interested in running for office will be turned over to the chairperson. The election ballot will be included in the Second Quarter 2001 issue of *The Philatelic Communicator*. □

## USPS POSTAL NEWS UPDATE

Receipts of recent releases of the United States Postal Service *Postal News* are: Dated Sept. 13 & 25-received Oct. 14, dated Oct. 10-received Oct. 27, dated Nov. 13 & 20-received Dec. 1, dated Dec. 22 & 28-received Jan. 11 and Jan. 11-received Jan. 22. In the more recent issues, receipt has actually been in advance of the issue date of the stamp being announced—a marked improvement. □

Writing is no trouble: you just jot down ideas as they occur to you. The jotting is simplicity itself—it is the occurring which is difficult.

—Stephen Leacock

## Computer Corner

by Ken Sanford

Export Your Favorites: Here's a tip if you use both Netscape Navigator and Internet Explorer (IE). You don't need a special utility to convert bookmarks and cookies. Microsoft, surprisingly, has provided a simple utility for this purpose. In IE, choose File Import and Export, and choose whether to import or export bookmarks or cookies. On the Destination page, choose to work with an application, and select your Navigator profile from the list. Click Next and Finish and you're done.

Language Translation Web Sites Free Translation: <http://www.freetranslation.com> is an excellent web site, if you need to translate occasional paragraphs or short sentences. It also provides web page translation on the fly. All you do is type in the sentences and it does the rest. For web page translation you paste in the URL, select the original and destination languages and it returns the active web page text, duly translated. The web site is a showcase for the commercially available TranscendRT machine translation engine that is used on corporate sites.

Lernout & Hauspie's own web site <http://www.lhs.co.uk> provides a similar facility using its iTranslator engine, but it's not as quick as that provided by Free Translation and it suffers from the same limitations. For general resources, Access Trade [http://www.access-trade.com/guides/translat\\_select/guide.shtm](http://www.access-trade.com/guides/translat_select/guide.shtm) provides a comprehensive guide to the differences between machine and human translation and links to online facilities. Worldwide Auction Houses—Want a list of all the major (and many minor) auction houses worldwide? Just go to <http://www.stamp auction central.com>. It gives the mailing address, phone & fax numbers, email address, if any, and the website address, if they have a website. Each listing provides a description of the type of material normally handled, or in which the auction house specializes, as well as when they normally hold their auctions. I saved this list to my hard drive, and then I simply update it from the Internet from time to time.

□

## EDITOR WANTED

Anthony Zollo, MD, president of the International Society of Worldwide Stamp Collectors (ISWSC) recently announced that their newsletter editor, Marian MacLeod, has decided to step down and they are now recruiting a replacement. The editor position is responsible for producing their bimonthly newsletter, *The Circuit* and sending it off to the printer. Marian will work with the new editor to ensure a smooth transition.

*The Circuit* newsletter is a key benefit of membership and the main communication vehicle for the ISWSC. Any WU30 member having any desktop publishing or journalism experience, please consider taking on this very important job. The position pays \$200 per edition.

Please contact Dr. Zollo at P.O. Box 150407, Lufkin, TX 75915-0407, e-mail: [zolloam@lcc.net](mailto:zolloam@lcc.net).

Assassination is the extreme form of censorship.

—George Bernard Shaw

## SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

(As of January 25, 2001)

### Welcome Our New Member:

1866 John H. V. Hesse, P.O. Box 98, New Hamburg, Ontario, Canada N0B 2G0. First article to appear in the *American Philatelist*. Sponsor: George Griffenhagen.

### Address Changes:

0872 Millard H. Mack, 3805 Edwards Road, #200, Cincinnati, OH 45209-1916.

1591 Russell H. Anderson, c/o Frauenhoffer, P.O. Box 57, Torrington, CT 06790-0057.

1667 Jeanette H. Zonay, c/o Precious Cake, 745 Broadway, Hanover, PA 17331-2014.

### Resignations:

1346 Dulcie M. Apgar, Thousand Oaks, CA

### Membership Dues:

The membership dues are:

USPS ZIP Code Addresses	\$15.00
Canada and Mexico	\$17.50
All Other Addresses	\$20.00

Payment must be made in U.S. funds by a check imprinted with a U.S. bank transit number, or by postal money order, payable to "APS Writers Unit #30." Some overseas members prefer to send U.S. bank notes by registered mail. Other methods of payment are not acceptable due to high bank exchange charges.

### Keep Your Mailing Address Current:

Please notify us of address changes to assure that you receive each issue of *The Philatelic Communicator* without delay. This will also save WU#30 more than one dollar because the USPS charges fifty cents when they have to send us an address correction, and we still have to pay the postage for re-shipping the issue to the member.

George Griffenhagen  
WU30 Secretary-Treasurer  
2501 Drexel Street  
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U. S. A.  
e-mail: [gbg@mail.aphanet.org](mailto:gbg@mail.aphanet.org)

□

It's a very excruciating life facing that blank piece of paper every day and having to reach up somewhere into the clouds and bring something down out of them.

—Truman Capote

## There's Many A Slip . . .

By James Bendon

The last preprinting stage of a book or of a journal involves authors, editors, typesetters and possibly others. By an iterative process of marking and making corrections they eventually reach a stage at which all involved consider that they need make no more changes. They have before them a set of final page proofs.

In the mistaken belief that nothing can now go wrong, they copy the whole laid out text complete with inset illustrations to a disk or CD and send it to the printer who in turn runs it through his image-setter to produce film ready for making litho plates.

Nevertheless, things do go wrong at this late stage. Why and how this happens can be answered by those with more technical know how that I have. Perusal of the Third Quarter 2000 issue of *The Philatelic Communicator*, which readers will have to hand, will show some examples:

- on page 3 the whole of the left-hand column is fully justified except the last paragraph which is ranged left;
- on page 10 there is a spurious line break in the middle of the third paragraph of the left-hand column and fourth and fifth lines of the right-hand column have lost the inter-word spaces;
- on page 16 the tabulation of the Table of Contents shows an unwanted indent and a misplaced page number.

I cannot believe that our Editor missed all of these.

Many other types of problems are frequently seen in printed material. Among the most common are the rendering of fractions other than halves, quarters and eighths, the setting of accented letters and the lining up of text and figures in tabular material.

What is the solution? Some will recommend using print (PRN) or Encapsulated Postscript (EPS) files, which in theory contain all the fonts and other data needed for correct photo-setting; experience shows that this is not a complete answer and that errors still occur. Another approach is to inspect the films produced on the image setter and to compare them with the final page proofs. The difficulties in this are that the films are likely to be in rolls two or even three feet wide with half the pages inverted and in apparently random sequence due to the imposition process, and that the films may have been produced many miles away from the checker's home base.

In publishing our own books we adopt a simplistic approach, but it works rather well. Once we are at the stage of having final paper page proofs we print again onto polyester film (this looks like tracing paper—do not use the transparencies sold for use in laser printers as the toner does not fuse and adhere well, and you will end up with broken and missing letters). The only requirements are a recently cleaned laser printer (ink jet printers seem unsatisfactory) with a driver capable of printing a mirror image, a freshish cartridge and the print density set above medium. These films can be carefully overlaid on the paper proofs when any differences will show immediately. Quality is not a problem, even at 600 dpi. □

## E Collector Newsletters

### in the Cyber Age

by Michael Connolly

email: [aranman@att.net](mailto:aranman@att.net)

In today's cyber-age, it's only fitting that we philatelists interact in cyberspace. We are doing it more and more these days. Online auctions, dealer web sites, society websites, chat rooms and more are being used by more and more collectors.

At the end of 1998, I proposed to the Éire Philatelic Association a society member newsletter to be e-mailed to interested members on a regular schedule. This would be a useful supplement to our society journal. I thought the idea of a lightly edited all-email newsletter, distributed for free to all interested members, was a good and, I think, a new idea. Members would contribute articles or bits of news to the newsletter by email or snail mail. We would get information to at least a portion of our membership in a timely fashion, relying on our society journal to get the information to the rest of the membership and, of course, for the more extensive and in-depth articles.

We produced our first issue in January 1999, and have issued an issue each month since. Our readership has increased to 180 and has expanded to include members of the Irish Airmail Society, the Irish Philatelic Circle and the Forschungs-und Arbeitsgemeinschaft Irland e.V. This idea is one that should work for almost any collector organization. One only needs to find a member willing to edit and publish the newsletter. Some of the benefits are: It is an added benefit of membership and may be useful in attracting new members. You eliminate the two major costs in most society newsletters, printing and postage. The newsletter can be in the hands of readers almost immediately, with news that might be stale by the time a quarterly journal reaches the membership. Online viewing of past issues of the newsletter could also be accessible from the society web page.

A 1-page newsletter or a 10-page one can be handled the same, so there is less pressure on the editor to wait for more copy before publishing. If there are any budding publishers or editors out there who might be interested, feel free to contact me for assistance in setting up your own newsletter. Back issues of our *Irish Philatelic Newsletter* can be viewed at: <http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Corridor/1290/IPNArchive.html>

□

## RUSSELL H. ANDERSON

Jay Nesbitt has informed us that Russell H. Anderson died on November 25, 2000. He was a member of WU30 for some time and authored an article in the Third Quarter 1994 PC on his experiences in supporting the hobby among prison inmates. Jay Nesbitt is the prisoner mentioned in the article. □

The last thing we decide in writing a book is what to put first.

—Blaise Pascal

## ►► Scanned Graphics . . . (continued from page 5)

minimum requirement for reproducing acceptable grayscale graphics, and I work with a Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 5MP which includes PostScript 2 capabilities. Although I have never used the PostScript language to produce a file for high-tech reproduction, I do find the feature handy for working with other software programs. Some programs include functions that will operate only with a PostScript printer. PostScript also claims to be better and faster at printing curved lines with minimal jaggies. The PostScript feature only slightly increases the cost of a laser printer, and I plan to stay with it for my next upgrade. Predictions are that as environmentalists push to rid the world of chemicals used for the plate-making process, more and more print shops will be moving to equipment that involves the use of PostScript language.

1200 dpi: For line art, I'm told that the difference in printouts between 600 dpi and 1200 dpi isn't that significant. For all types of computer work, however, the jump from 300 dpi to 600 dpi is quite dramatic.

Toner cartridges: In working with graphics, I've achieved better results with remanufactured toner cartridges. Not only are they considerably cheaper, but some vendors offer custom toner formulas. I order recharges with a special graphics toner, which provides a richer, darker printout. For best results, a cartridge should be broken-in a bit before using for a camera-ready copy. It's ready for optimum performance after printing out about 100 pages filled with an average amount of text.

Inkjet printers: By now you've no doubt noted that I seldom refer to the ever-popular inkjet printers. As much as they're touted for producing great graphics, and particularly when it comes to color photographs, they're near useless when it comes to working with line screens needed for the offset press. Examples and comparisons with laser printers will be in the next installment.

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Editor's Note: This will be continued in the next issue with sample illustrations, guidance on image editing, desktop publishing software, generations & a conclusion. □

## WU 30 CRITIQUE SERVICE

Past president Charles J. Peterson operates the Critique. There is no charge for the service. Details are:

**Periodicals**—Submit the four most recent issues. Include postage equivalent to four times the first class mailing fee. Any unused amount will be returned. Critiques can be expected in about 30 days.

**Books/manuscripts**—Inquire before sending, with a brief description of the item. Please include a stamped, addressed envelope for the reply. The time element for a book or manuscript can vary depending on length, other similar requests at hand and other commitments.

All submissions & correspondence should be sent to Charles J. Peterson, Box 5559, Laurel, MD 20726, phone 301-776-9822, e-mail: [cjp7777@aol.com](mailto:cjp7777@aol.com). □

## Canal Zone Philatelist

### Cumulative Index 1953-1999

Richard Spielberg, editor of the *Canal Zone Philatelist* recently announced the publication of the tenth update to their cumulative index. The *Canal Zone Philatelist* is the journal of the Canal Zone Study Group (CZSG), founded in 1952.

The index was initially developed by WU30 past president Charles J. Peterson and published in the *Philatelic Literature Review* in 1976. It is organized in three sections: Internal—matters relating to the Study Group; Subjects by Scott/CZSG number—the CZSG numbering system is an expanded one taken from the listings in *Canal Zone Stamps* by Plass, Brewster and Salz. Numbers from the United Postal Stationery Society catalog are also used where appropriate and lastly General Subjects—basically an alphabetically organized index.

The index was distributed to CZSG members with the Third Quarter 2000 issue of the *Canal Zone Philatelist*. The index also includes a list of CZSG publications currently available. Additional information may be found on their Website: <http://home.att.net/~a.bentz/Czsg.htm>. □

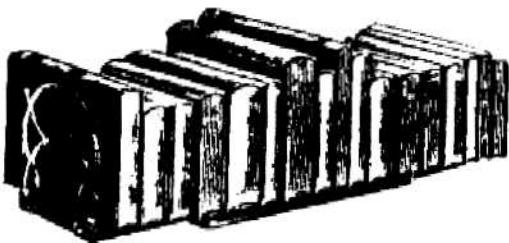
## Home Town Publicity

Recently, Peter J. Foote, a director of the Éire Philatelic Association, sent me a copy of his hometown newspaper, *The Beverly Review*. It's a weekly serving the towns of Beverly Hills, Morgan Park and Mount Greenwood, all near Chicago. If advertising is any indicator, it must have a significant circulation.

What didn't immediately catch my eye was a front page piece titled "Exhibit Celebrates Architect." Peter's note cleared that up. The article was about an exhibit of his in the Beverly branch library showing stamps and covers relating to the joint issues of Ireland and the United States honoring James Hoban the architect of the White House. The story was continued on an inside page where there was a good size photo of the exhibit.

The point of this is to point out a very useful way of publicizing the hobby that all of us who are collectors and writers could emulate. An exhibit of timely material (the White House during the Florida "long count") and interesting material in a public place coupled with local publicity in the lay press or media might just interest a few more in our hobby. Something like this could be just the "spark" that provides the incentive for an adult to dig out that old collection he or she had as a youngster, or the one old Uncle Henry left them.

Some time ago when the Council of Philatelic Organizations (COPO) was still functioning, the group facilitated the distribution of stamp collecting articles by Les Winick to newspapers all over the country. Since then there has really been nothing to replace it and those regular stamp columns, for the most part, have been eliminated by the major papers. Perhaps filling the gap is up to us. JEF □



## REVIEWS

**NOTE:** Material for review may be sent to the editor at the address noted on the inside front cover. Reviews are also welcomed from others. Reviews from those having an interest in the item such as publishers, distributors, etc., must include a copy of the publication with the review [which, on request, we will return]. *Philatelic Communicator* reviews should be concise and stress those aspects that are helpful examples (positive or negative) for other authors, editors and publishers.

**Krause-Minkus Standard Catalog of Australia Stamps,** Maurice D. Wozniak editor, Krause Publications, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990-0001, 2000, 160 + xii pages, 6 x 9", soft cover, perfect binding, illustrated, \$14.95 (+\$3.25 shipping when buying direct from the publisher), ISBN 0-87341-961-8.

This catalog is in a handy format that a collector with a primary interest in Australia can conveniently bring to a show, bourse, etc. However, a missed opportunity for this collector of Australia is the exclusion of the Australian States: New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, & Western Australia. This is the first Krause effort at an Australian catalog and, like many first efforts, there are opportunities for improvement.

The most obvious is layout. Sets of stamps are not treated as such. Every stamp is illustrated, even if the only difference is the denomination and, in some instances, even when there is no change in denomination. The quality and clarity of the illustrations themselves vary from fair to poor. Some are of canceled stamps which does nothing to enhance an already somewhat fuzzy image. Two illustrations of stamps overprinted "SPECIMEN" were noted. These were not to illustrate specimens, but normal stamps. Further, there is considerable inconsistency between the relative size of the illustration and the actual stamp. By way of example, a novice might think that the Kangaroo stamps were issued in seven different sizes.

One of the hallmarks of the *Minkus* catalogs has been a description of the design and, when applicable, the purpose of the commemoration. Let me compare the new catalog with my (very) old *Minkus*. The old described the 1945 set, #257-9, as issued on February 19<sup>th</sup> of that year to mark the "inauguration of the Duke of Gloucester (shown with Duchess) as governor-general, Feb 19 1945," the 2½d is illustrated and the three values of the set listed below the explanation which follows the illustration. The new *Krause-Minkus* only provides the year date, merely identifies the portraits, illustrates each value with considerable white space to the right of each repetitive illustration and, in short, uses more space to convey less information. In another listing, we are left to wonder what "B.C.O.F." stands for in the occupation of Japan set (260-266). The old *Minkus* told us that it stood for "British Commonwealth Occupation

Force." These examples are not exceptions.

The sixth line of the title page notes: "Listings 1948 - 1999." While "1999" is the last year of issue of the stamps in the catalog, the significance of "1948" escapes us. The listings for half-penny denominations are given as 1/2p rather than ½p. In sterling, 1/2p looks an awful lot like *one shilling two pence*. Perhaps a minor point that would confuse very few, but ½, as, again, the old *Minkus* used, would avoid the possibility.

As noted in the beginning of this review, there are a number of opportunities for improvement.

JEF

**Postryttaren 2000, ed. Erik Hamberg, hardbound, Postmuseum of Sweden, Stockholm 2000, Copies come with a membership in the Friends of the Postmuseum, Box 2002, 10311 Stockholm, Sweden, 150 SKr (approx. \$20), 188 pages, 6½ by 9¾", illustrations (some color), Swedish text, ISSN 0586-6758.**

This annual book of collected articles, somewhat akin to the American Philatelic Congress books, once again offers a variety of scholarly topics, all capably edited by the Museum's Erik Hamberg. Museum president Gunnar Nordlinder describes how the museum was completely overhauled in order to meet the needs of visitors and users in the 21st century, with newly installed exhibits and a computerized library and information retrieval center. The story of the renovations is detailed in the first article by Carola Bratt et al. In keeping with a recently popular subject area, there is an article about the Titanic by Claes-Göran Wetterholm, who studies maritime history. Postal historian Jan Billgren discusses insured mail sent abroad in an extended article. Robert Mattson gives an overview of a little known exhibition held in Stockholm in 1909, using view cards, artifacts, and postal history items to tell the story. Articles by Jane Rothlind and Christina Jägerbäck profile two of Sweden's stamp engravers—Martin Mörck and Czeslaw Slania. The concluding article summarizes the activities of the museum for 1999. To receive *Postryttaren* each year, one should join the Friends of the Postmuseum (Föreningen Postmusei Vänner).

Alan Warren

**Irish Airmail—Back of the Book Items by William J. Murphy, Éire Philatelic Association, Special Offers, 58 Porter Street, Granby, MA 01033-9516, 2000, 32 pages, 5¾ x 8¼", soft cover, saddle stitched, illustrations, bibliography, \$4.50 (\$3.50 to EPA members) postpaid.**

This is the fifth booklet in a series by the author, the previous titles being: *Airway Letters To and From Belfast*, *Irish Airmail—Balloon Posts, Rocket, Helicopter, Parachute and Glider Mail*, *Irish Aerogrammes and Airgraphs* and *O.A.T. and A.V.2. Markings on Irish Airmail*. The list of Association publications included in the booklet notes that these and the author's full length book *Irish Airmail, 1919-1990* are still available.

As might be expected from the title, this little booklet contains a number of diverse subjects. Included is a listing of 31 sieges of Paris balloon flight covers addressed to Ireland, special flights and commemorative covers of classic flights. Also listed are Aer Lingus meter mail, Irish airmail stamps and airmail related cancellations. While there is some variability in the quality of the illustrations, they are more than adequate for

recognition and identification purposes. An interesting and useful compilation of the byways of Irish airmail.

JEF

**Peruvian Civil Aviation** by Herbert H. Moll, American Air Mail Society, 2000, 86 pages, 8½ x 11", perfect bound, \$10 plus \$4 postage and handling from American Air Mail Society, 1978 Fox Burrow Court, Neenah WI 54956-1184. ISBN 0-939429-23-3.

The author has written previously on the revenues and postal stationery of Peru. His in depth knowledge of the country and its philately are revealed in his latest work on civil aviation and its handling of airmail. Moll personally knew many of the key people involved with the development of the country's aviation.

He begins with the pioneers Jorge Chavez and Juan Bielovucic. A national hero of Peru, Chavez was born in Paris of Peruvian parents and studied aviation mechanics in France as well as learning to be a pilot. After obtaining his civil license, Chavez flew for two hours in the Simplon Pass. While returning he ran into bad weather and crash landed at Domodossola in Italy where he died three days later from injuries suffered in the crash. Chavez was buried in France but his remains were later transferred to Peru. A Chavez monument was erected at Lima and the city's airport is named for the pioneer.

Juan Bielovucic was the first pilot to fly a plane in Peru in 1911. He also trained in France but came to Peru to conduct this historic flight. He was born in Lima in 1889 and died in 1949. Moll then describes the early flights in Peru during the 1920-1930 period.

Herbert Tweddle carried out the first transport of airmail in Peru in 1920. However, regular airmail service in the country did not begin until 1927 with the inauguration of service between Lima and Iquitos, and in conjunction with Peru's first airmail stamp, a 50-centavos value overprinted "Servicio Aereo."

By the end of the decade Pan American Grace Airways, Faucett, and Linea Aerea Nacional had all been established. Even the American Jimmy Doolittle made airmail history in Peru by flying the first experimental flight from Lima to La Paz, carrying 800 covers with a special cachet. Moll tells the story of the development of Faucett and Panagra airlines. By 1963 Faucett had carried 20 million pounds of mail. In the 1930s and 1940s regular service to Peru was introduced by Air France, Lufthansa, and other European based airlines. Peruvian International Airways was founded in 1946.

Although the Zeppelins did not fly to Peru, mail that originated there or arrived there was sent on the lighter than air craft. The final chapter of Moll's book records postal rates of Peru from 1928. The rate tables are incomplete as good postal archives are not readily available. One appendix records important dates in Peruvian aviation history, and another repeats, in English, the 1920 decree that established airmail in the country.

An extensive list of references and an index round out the book. A generous number of illustrations include a few historic photos and a number of airmail covers, documenting the history of aviation in Peru. The technical aspects of the publication are quite capably done.

Alan Warren

*Norske Brevportotakster til Utlandet 1743-1855 (Norwegian Letter Rates to Foreign Destinations)* by Harry Snarvold, Oslo Filatelistklubb, 1999. 58 pages (one-sided), 8½ by 12", hardbound, Norwegian text, approximately \$40 plus postage from Oslo Filatelistklubb, Box 298 Sentrum, 0103 Oslo, Norway (credit cards accepted).

Postal historian Snarvold has written previously on the handling of early mails of Norway sent out of the country. He now completes the picture for the 1743-1855 prestamp period with this useful book on rates. The author breaks his rate discussion into two major areas—mail sent via Sweden and via Denmark. Rates are often in addition to internal Norwegian rates to bring the letter to the border, and then vary depending on the routing.

In addition to rate tables, Snarvold illustrates a number of covers and provides detailed rate analyses. A few of the covers are shown in color. Pertinent postal conventions and circulars are noted by date. A table shows equivalent currencies for twenty countries including Sweden, Denmark and Norway. Literature references are presented and, instead of an index, there is a detailed table of contents. Despite the Norwegian language text, much of the information is in tabular form or explained with figures in the analyses of covers. This book brings important information to students of prestamp mail of Norway that was sent out of the country.

Alan Warren

*The Design and Engraving of Perkins Bacon Stamps Based on the Chalon Portrait* by John Dickson, The Royal Philatelic Society London (Supplement to the London Philatelist, December 2000), 2000, 29 pages, 7½ x 10¼", soft cover, saddle stitched, illustrations, bibliography, ISSN 0024-6131.

It's somewhat unusual to find a monograph devoted to the a single design. Yet this is an extraordinary design and a fascinating account of a rich portion of the classic period of our hobby.

The author provides considerable background of the portraits of the eighteen year old queen by Alfred Edward Chalon. A full color reproduction of one is given in the frontispiece. Attention is given to the engravings based on the portrait, and the application of the design to banknotes and finally stamps produced by Perkins Bacon for various stamp issuing entities of the then British Empire.

It is also noted that there has not always been agreement on specific engravers of some of the stamp dies. The account of productions is in itself quite interesting. Graphics are good and some very elusive material, including some from the Royal Collection, is shown.

JEF

*2001 Catalogue of Errors on U.S. Postage Stamps*, by Stephen R. Datz, Krause Publications, 700 E. State Street, Iola, WI 54990-0001, 2000. 188 pages, 6 x 9", perfect binding, card stock covers, illustrated, Table of Contents, \$14.95, ISBN: 0-87341-942-1.

A summary of the handbook's main body includes: 1. Imperforates for Postage Stamps, Air Mails, Special Deliveries, Postage Dues, Official Stamps, and Migratory Birds. 2. Color



Omitted Errors for Postage Stamps, Air Mails, Migratory Birds, Postage Dues, Stamped Envelopes, Aerogramme, Postal Cards, and Air Mail Postal Cards. 3. Inverts for Postage Stamps and Postal Cards. 4. Reverse Inscriptions omitted and inverted. 5. Census of Plate Number Coil Stamps. 6. EFOs & Other Unusual stamps. Individual entries contain data on prices, known quantities, descriptions, warnings of fakes and forgeries, condition, defects and pricing variations.

For some unknown reason, the author chose to not include "Air Mail Inverts" in the Table of Contents. The immediate reaction is to turn to the section where the inverts are catalogued. Yes, the Inverted Jenny is there in a section curiously entitled "Air Mail." The seven page Introduction is well written and should be consulted by any reader. This is especially true for the paragraphs and illustrations that detail how to use the catalog. Why the "Imperforate Plate Number Coil Strips - Quantities Known" pp. 165-168 is listed in the Table of Contents is a mystery.

The soft paper used detracts from the illustrations, which tend to be "muddy." There is useful data throughout the handbook. For example, an illustration of the 32¢ Nixon stamp with the lithographed portion inverted in relation to the engraved portion is listed and illustrated. It is also noted that an employee who was subsequently charged, tried and convicted stole this printer's waste.

John F. Lyding

**Linn's Focus on Forgeries, A Guide to Forgeries of Common Stamps, second edition, by Varo E. Tyler, Linn's Stamp News, Box 29, Sidney, OH 45365, 2000, 330 + xiv pages, 9 x 6", soft cover, perfect bound, illustrations, index, \$20.00, ISBN 0-940403-88-9 (hardbound edition available for \$35.00).**

For a number of years the author has had a regular column in *Linn's* illustrating a forgery of a stamp alongside a genuine, together with an explanation of the difference. In 1993, 150 of these columns were presented in book form. This new edition includes those 150 and an additional 171 items.

The presentation of information is succinct and easy to follow. In just about all cases an enlarged distinguishing detail from both genuine and forged is provided.

The quality of the illustrations is excellent. While it might be just esthetics of high quality coated paper vs. newsprint, the illustrations seem to be clearer than those in the regular column in *Linn's*.

The stamps are arranged by country and secondarily more or less in the order found in the *Scott* catalog. However, there are also a number of *non-Scott* items such as locals. In addition to a table of contents, there is a rigorous index.

The Introduction is a good primer on the subject and explains the rationale for forging "low-to-medium-priced stamps" in general terms. "Common" is a somewhat subjective term and some might consider at least a few of the stamps included in this book to be above that descriptor. This is a very minor point.

An author struggling with the problem of explaining a moderately complex philatelic subject with relatively few words, might find this author's approach very useful.

JEF

**Catalogue de l'Exposition des 100 Timbres et Documents Philatéliques parmi les plus rares du monde. [Catalogue of the Exhibition of 100 Stamps and Philatelic Documents Among the Rarest of the World], Anon., Monaco 2000, 184 pp., 8½ x 12", all color illus. (with English and French commentaries), hardbound, gold imprinted green velvet cover, French Franes 250 (+ 70F postage and handling, Visa, Master, Am. Express or Eurocard), from Club de Monte-Carlo, c/o Musée des Timbres et des Monnaies, 11 Teffasses de Fontvieille, 98000 MONACO.**

For the third time, Monaco has hosted an exhibition of invited philatelic rarities in its Museum of Stamps and Coins - "Museum of Wonders," according to a news release. The show, at the start of December 2000, occasioned the release of a third catalogue featuring singular exhibits in color, with owners' French explanations underneath and a section of English descriptions in back. Whereas the second show featured only covers and documents, the third one reverted to a mixture of stamps (including proofs and essays) and covers.

After some introductory text, the order of presentation is one item each belonging to the Prince of Monaco and Queen Elizabeth II; to sixteen organizations, mostly postal museums, in alphabetic order of their countries' names in French (Vatican counts as a stamp-issuing entity), with the United Nations and the Olympic Museum, both in Switzerland, bringing up the rear; followed by material belonging to 96 members of the Club of Monaco in alphabetic order of last names.

In a quick survey, which makes no claim to precision, I counted just over 90 ordinary members' exhibits at each of the three shows, with about 30 names differing between the 1997 and 1999 catalogues. Thus, with the number of ordinary members limited to 100, the turnover was considerable, at least at the beginning of the club's existence. That should be good news for those on a waiting list for admission.

The extraordinary material, from all over the globe, as usual, ranges from old newspapers through a post office notice to propaganda matter and old as well as modern philatelic souvenirs, of which one or at most a few are known. I have arbitrarily picked two of them, both about postal history, that caught my interest.

The first of these is a cover from Arlon, Belgium, to besieged Paris during the 1870-71 Franco-German War. It carries a common 30-centimes Belgian stamp and an Arlon cds of 30 December 1870. The next day it was on a train to Erquelinnes and, somewhere on its way, it acquired a French small, framed PD, showing postage was paid to destination. The address is Monsieur Klipfel, examiner for admission to the school of St. Cyr, Hôtel Corneille, Paris, Par Moulins Allier. Along the top and upper left side of the cover are five 20-centimes stamps of France, all canceled with the French numeral cancel 2565 in the usual rhombus. That last line of the address and the 1-franc French postage show that the letter was intended for the first underwater mail route, i.e., for one of the hollow zinc balls, stuffed with letters at Moulins-sur-Allier and thrown into the Seine upstream of Paris. None ever got to Paris during the war. But how to account for the franking and its cancel? The writer must have gotten the French stamps somehow, perhaps by picking them up in France. They were untouched by the Belgians, but the numeral 2565 was used at Moulins, of course!

One of the interesting facts about the Moulins mail is that the Government Delegation specified the postage simply as being "1 franc," forgetting that announcement of this mail would be made abroad as well, and how foreigners might pay that postage from abroad. One Swiss writer simply used a Swiss 1-franc stamp, which was accepted. The Monaco cover indicates that the Belgian had a method of getting French stamps. Mail from Britain is known to have been sent via U.S. and French diplomatic means to consulates in France where it was franked. I owned one cover sent under cover to people in Switzerland who forwarded it, again under cover, to people in France who franked it. Thus, despite the oversight in the announcement by the French post office, foreigners found ways and means of using the world's first sub fluvial mail.

The second cover, also small, is addressed to Colonel Paravicini(?) at St. Elisabeth's, Here; postmarked with a red cds "Basel/Vor-Mittag/19 FEVR 52" (mixed German and French!); and franked with two Basel "doves." The exhibitor was apparently told that St. Elisabeth's was a town near another town called "Here." Actually, St. E.'s was some sort of institution at Basel, perhaps a hospital or a home for old soldiers.

But the peculiarity that struck me was why a single-weight, local letter should be franked with two Basel stamps (one of which is badly cut into), said by the exhibitor to be of two different printings. Inquiries in Switzerland revealed that the postal history of these Swiss locals is still in the process of being discovered. Double postage may, indeed, have existed for a single-weight, local letter, though this is not yet certain for Basel. It might, e.g., have paid for the difference between delivery on foot or by a mounted postman. The two printings of the Basel "dove" are said to be distinguishable by their light and dark colors, but for that one would have to see the original and compare the stamps with known ones from each printing.

Paper, printing, and binding are excellent as usual. Minor errors in the text appear to be quite few, such as wrong month in French (p. 45) and wrong year in English (p. 142) for the very same item, evidently printer's errors and easily corrected.

The catalogue is highly recommended to everyone fascinated with exceptional philately from all over. Like the illustrations in its predecessors, the new ones are of great interest and worth studying (apart from recurring hyperbole), not just to admire items but also to follow up on whatever questions certain pieces may raise in the viewer's mind. The more unusual the cover—and it is usually covers that raise questions—the more likely it is to lead the inquisitive student into uncharted territory that few cataloguers and collectors ever entered. Charting such trackless wastelands of philately can be even more fun than chasing after rarities.

Ernst M. Cohn

**Katalog Der Deutschen Luftpost, Teil 13: Erstflüge 1991-1999 – ohne Deutsche Lufthansa (Catalog of German Airmail, Volume 13: First Flights 1991-1999 without Lufthansa), by Erich Haberer, Wiegand & Haberer, Luftpostliteratur, Renningen, Germany, 2000, 64 pages, A5 size, soft cover, German text, US\$10.00 + \$3.00 shipping, from Aerophil, 12 Chemin des Tuillots, CH-1293 Bellevue (GE), Switzerland. Email: kaerophil@cs.com. Fax +41 22 7742472**

This 13th in the series of German Airmail Catalogs, gives chronological listings of all first & special flights, both domestic

and foreign to and from Germany by airlines except West German Lufthansa Airlines. The listings give the date, main cities where the flight(s) operated and the legs over which covers were flown. Each leg where covers are known to have been carried is priced separately, in German marks. Few details of the flights are given, but all cachets & special postmarks are shown, as well as some actual first flight covers. The text is in German but is easy to follow.

Ken Sanford

**All About Stamps** by Wayne L. Youngblood, Krause Publications, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990-0001, 2000, 189 pages, 6 x 9", soft cover, perfect binding, illustrated, \$14.95 (+\$3.25 shipping when buying direct from the publisher), ISBN 0-87341-963-4.

From time to time we all need a little refresher on the meaning some philatelic term or another—a senior moment perhaps? Maybe.

In this book Wayne Youngblood has developed a useful reference for all of us, regardless of level of expertise. It's arranged alphabetically and well illustrated. The introduction notes that relatively new terms such as "snowman perforation" and "holograms" are included. For the most part, it appears to be quite accurate. An exception might be the illustration for "stamped envelope" on page 166 which strikes us as a stamped to order letter card. Letter cards are not to be found in the book.

The basis for this publication is the author's continuing column in *Stamp Collector* titled "All About Stamps." *Déjà Vu?* Seems like Ken Wood's *This is Philately* which also ran as a *Stamp Collector* column before appearing as a three volume hard bound set. The scope here is different. Youngblood does not include geographic terms as did Wood. The possibility of future editions is also noted.

JEF

**Conservation, Restoration and Philatelic Chemistry** by V. K. Gupta, 1998, Delhi, India, 208 pages, 7½ x 10", hardbound, £30 from Vera Trinder Ltd., 38 Bedford St., Strand, London WC2E 9EU, England.

The author practices law in India but has developed deep philatelic knowledge as a collector, international exhibitor, state judge, author of previous books on philately, and serving in various positions in organized philately. Gupta first describes how exhibits are robbed of philatelic value through rough handling; inspection by judges, commissioners, customs agents; exposure to heat, light, humidity, temperature fluctuations; intrusion of fumes and dust into the frames; and many other factors. He offers some ways to alleviate the toll that these factors can take on a collection. Stamps and covers themselves undergo long term self destruction due to the composition of paper, gum and ink. External factors that can be guarded against include dust, climatic conditions, heat (Gupta describes a loss due to hot photo lamps), light and humidity.

A chapter on biological destruction discusses the damaging effects of mold, fungus, and silverfish. Some methods of treating such problems include use of the freezer, microwave oven, and certain chemicals. Here one needs to be sure that the cure isn't worse than the problem. While use of mothballs may keep away certain vermin, I wonder about its effect on the collector who

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may be continuously exposed to these chlorinated hydrocarbon vapors. The author also mentions carbon tetrachloride for detecting watermarks. This compound has been pretty much banned as a household product in the United States. Although I used the chemical for this purpose as a child, I wonder how much liver damage I might have incurred. Gupta rightfully warns about any object that comes in contact with stamps and covers and the need for them to be essentially inert. These include tongs, hinges, mounts, perforation gauges, and sheet protectors among others.

Other aspects of preserving a collection are discussed such as storage, theft, handling, water and fire hazards, and insurance. He stresses the role that FIP ought to play in assuring that certain exhibition conditions are met. Although they attempt to do this, a lot more can be done to insure proper protection of exhibit materials. Proper training of commissioners would be a good place to start. In chapter 7 Gupta presents a "white paper" on conservation but he also includes restoration. He cautions dealers to make every effort to protect materials while in their possession. According to the author, the FIP studied the effects of gum and album pages over fifty years ago and even had a Commission for the Preservation of Collections. Gupta feels FIP should take a leadership role again to research preservation techniques and publicize their recommendations widely. The author also recommends that workshops be organized to demonstrate such methods as deacidification, dealing with folds and creases, and pH measurement. One chapter is devoted to restoration, the FIP guidelines with respect to identifying repaired items, the question of ethics, and the dangers of alteration. Restoration techniques delved into include washing and drying, ironing out creases, chemical re-sizing of paper, treating gum problems and curled stamps among others. Another chapter details experiments or procedures that will enable one to conduct some restoration. Further chemical techniques are presented for stain removal, restoring color, and removing adhesive tape. Over twenty types of stains are dealt with from rust to lipstick. Several appendices identify information and materials sources, give a glossary of terms, and list museum conservation standards. In addition to references at the end of each chapter there is a general bibliography, although good standard bibliographic practice is not used.

Mechanical aspects of this book are a major problem. The typeface is a sans serif one that is difficult to read. The text is rife with typos as well as poor sentence construction—problems that could easily have been prevented with an English language editor and proofreader. In discussing chemicals used to study stamps and covers, Gupta mentions that trichloroethylene is safer to use than carbon tetrachloride. Any chlorinated hydrocarbon must be treated with great respect, and protective measures must be taken with such chemicals to prevent contact with the skin, eyes, and lungs. In summary, this book, despite its shortcomings, stresses the physical aspects of protecting and preserving our philatelic assets and can provide some useful thought on what we, as temporary curators of our collections, need to do so that they last into the next century.

Alan Warren

*United States Postal Card Catalog, 2000, John H. Beachboard, editor, United Postal Stationery Society, Box 1116, Thousand Oaks, CA 91358-1116, 2000, 415 + LVII pages, 6 x 9", both hardbound & loose leaf editions avail-*

**able, illustrations, Hardbound edition \$40.00; loose leaf \$30.00 [20% discount to UPSS members] + \$3.00 domestic shipping, \$5.00 foreign, ISBN: 0-9670045-2-7 (hardbound).**

Not to be too "picky," but this book is much more than just a catalog. It is really a handbook. A great deal of information is provided on the background, production and history of United States postal cards. Additionally, early exposition post cards and exposition station and slogan postmarks through 1904 are illustrated and explained. Cross references to *Scott* and *Minkus* catalog numbers are provided.

Some illustrations were missing and four replacement pages were provided. Not a problem with the loose leaf edition, but a little awkward on the hardbound. Although less expensive, the loose leaf edition might be preferable since it will lie flat—always a convenience with a reference book. The publishers have been able to beat inflation. Thanks to the Lewandowski Fund, they are able to offer this new edition which contains 15% more pages at a price that is 10% lower than the 1995 edition.

This book can serve as a model for anyone contemplating an in-depth publication on any long-run series, such as a nation's postal cards or any similar subject that has both breadth and depth.

JEF

*Katalog Der Aerogramme von Asien (Aerogramme Catalog of Asia), by Werner Wiegand, 2000, Wiegand & Haberer, Luftpostliteratur, Renningen, Germany, 192 pages, A5 size, soft cover, German text, US\$20.00 plus \$3.00 postage & handling, from Aerophil, 12 Chemin des Tuilots, CH-1293 Bellevue (GE), Switzerland. Email: kaerophil@cs.com. Fax +41 22 7742472.*

This is a compilation of the previous catalogs of Aerogrammes of Asia, which were in separate volumes. It now covers the aerogrammes of all Asian countries from Abu Dhabi to Vietnam. Brief description & value of each aerogramme--mint & used. Most are illustrated. The text is in German but easy to follow with the aid of a German dictionary.

Ken Sanford

*Danish West Indies Mails 1754-1917, Vol. I - Postal History, 2nd edition, revised and enlarged by John L. DuBois, edited by J. A. Farrington and R. G. Schnell, Jay Smith & Associates, Snow Camp NC, 2000, 198 + xiv pages, 8½ x 11", hardbound, \$75 from the publisher postpaid to USA addresses; foreign postage extra, ISBN 0-9656592-4-0.*

The original three volume set with the late Victor Engstrom as editor-in-chief has been out of print and demanding significant prices at auction. This new volume is the first in a new series, which expands on the original with improved illustrations and in a larger format. The original volume was authored by Robert G. Stone. His material has been reorganized to some extent, expanded upon and updated with new information. The new series results from a collaboration of specialists, many of whom are members of the Danish West Indies Study Group of the Scandinavian Collectors Club.

The first chapter sets the stage with an overview of the geography and history of DWI. The Danish West India Company was dissolved in 1754 and the colony came under the direct control of Denmark. From 1754 to 1807, only 47 letters are recorded. New research has increased the census figures for

known covers bearing the first four stamps of DWI, covers bearing stamps of more than one country, and covers bearing the bi-color issues of DWI. Topics covered in subsequent chapters are the British packet and postal agencies including packet schedules and rates, the French mail services and U.S. mail services of St. Thomas (with usage of U.S. stamps), forwarders, and private post offices.

The illustrations of the forwarders' cachets are vastly improved over the first edition. In the new edition the discussion on ship letters has been broken out into a chapter of its own. Two new chapters are added—one on German packet mail and one on St. Thomas transit mail in the period 1842-1877.

Another improvement is a price guide for early DWI postal history, indicating low and high values depending on condition and demand. Where more than one marking enhances the value of a cover, a premium is indicated. A second appendix lists postal, e-mail, and website addresses for organizations that are concerned with DWI philately. An extensive listing of sources and bibliography along with a list of important auction sales, plus an index, conclude the book. The bibliography is expanded over the original edition. The book size, typeface, layout, and especially the illustration quality are greatly improved over the first edition. Ray Norby's love of typesetting was appreciated at the time of his original printing. However, the technical improvements in book production and the attraction of on-demand publication have set new standards of quality. Typos in the new edition are rare.

*Alan Warren*

**2001 Kraus-Minkus Stamps & Prices: A Mini-Catalog of United States Stamps**, edited by Maurice D. Wozniak, Krause Publications, 700 E. State Street, Iola, WI 54990-0001, 2000, 304 pages, 6 x 9", perfect binding, card stock covers, illustrated, Table of Contents, \$14.95, ISBN: 0-87341-962-6.

The catalog illustrates and provides details on all stamps issued by the United States from the first issue through the 33¢ coral pink rose issued April 7, 2000. In addition to offering a free cross-reference guide to the *Scott Catalogue*, a three page "Introduction" provides details on: How to use this Catalog" in which the editor states that, "The date of issue, subject of the stamp image, denomination and color of the stamp are given to help in identification. The prices given for used and unused stamps are based on actual selling prices by dealers or at auction.

Unfortunately, the date entry limited to year of initial issue. On the other hand, until recent years when the Postal Service wisely started printing year on stamps, year of issue was rarely helpful in the identification process. The handbook stays true to the *Minkus* catalog methodology claiming to use chronological order in listing. Actually, the *Minkus* system is fortunately modified the system to keep most series in a logical sequence. For example, consider *Minkus* numbers 418-420 (*Scott* 551-4), the regular issue of 1922-25. Actual issue dates are: #418 April 4, 1925; #419 Jan. 17, 1923; #420 March 19, 1925 and #421 Jan. 15, 1923. The term price is a misnomer as this is not really a price list (i.e., Krause Publications is not offering to sell at the stated "price"), but rather a compilation of retail offerings and winning bids at auction. The values listed appear to be reasonable and like *Scott* have established a minimum of 20¢.

Perhaps the most useful feature of the handbook is its ability to act as an inventory-want list with a set of five boxes at the end of each entry. There are profuse illustrations, which for the most part are shown, full-size or nearly so. This is better than the average catalog illustration. The identification of individual stamps would be aided by consistently including a description of the design with each listing for those issues containing multiple designs. For example, each stamp in the 110th Anniversary of the U.S. Submarine Force sheet (*Minkus* CM2107-211f, SCOTT 3373-77) is individually identified in the main entry, while there is no hint of the numbering of individual stamps in the 1999 Broadway Songwriters sheet (*Minkus* CM2092-2097 SCOTT 3345-50).

Of course no catalog/price list review would complete without a few price comparisons. In the following list a comparison of the "price - value" assigned by the two publishers are given for the 1893 Columbian Exposition Issue. Please note that this is not a direct comparison since the "price" is based on "Unused F-VF" while the "value" is related to a more stringent unused VF criterion.

Denomination	<i>Minkus</i>	<i>Scott</i>
1¢	\$17.50	\$25.00
2¢	\$17.50	\$22.50
3¢	\$40.00	\$62.50
4¢	\$60.00	\$87.50
5¢	\$65.00	\$95.00
10¢	\$95.00	\$135.00
\$1.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,500.00
\$5.00	\$1,750.00	\$3,750.00

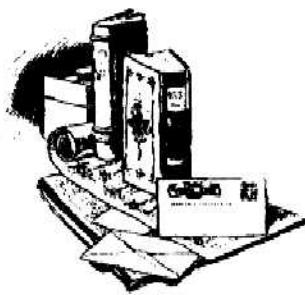
In a more current vein when both publishers use a similar M NH VF basis, *Minkus* lists the 1986 AMERIPEX Miniature Sheets at \$5.25 (\$4.50 used) and *Scott* \$3.75 with complete used sheets not priced.

*John Lyding* □

## CHESTER 2002

The national philatelic exhibition, Chester 2002, sponsored by the Northwestern Federation of Philatelic Societies of Great Britain, and the Association of British Philatelic Societies, will be held November 29-30 of that year. The exhibition includes a literature class, and members of the Writers Unit are permitted to enter publications in the competition. The prospectus is now available and can be obtained from William D. Hogg, Event Coordinator, Gunnersbury House, 22 Watling Street, Fullwood, Preston PR2 8DY, United Kingdom. There are two sections in the literature category. Handbooks and special studies, e.g. monographs, specialized research articles, bibliographies and specialized catalogs. Periodicals including social magazines, journals and newsletters, year books, study articles from such sources, etc.

The works do not have to be in English but must have been published during the three years prior to the exhibition, and submitted by authors, editors, or publishers. Entries will be judged similar to those entered at Glasgow 2000 last year, and will be evaluated on the following point system: 40% Treatment of contents 40% Originality, significance, and depth of research 15% Technical matters 5% Presentation. Completed preliminary interest forms, sent with the prospectus, are due to the organizing committee by August 1, 2001.



# LETTERS

## From Ken Lawrence:

Dick Riley's proposal is not new. As long as stamp hobbyists have been on-line, some have been demanding that APS ought to steal writers' work and make it available to them free. The only costs they imagine are those associated with digitizing, uploading, and hosting.

For the record: *Linn's*, *Scott Stamp Monthly*, the *American Philatelist*, and other hobby publications do not own the rights to freelance articles they publish. Absent a contract that says otherwise, they have purchased only first-time serial print publication rights in English for North America. All other rights belong to the authors.

The same is true of society journals that pay authors nothing; they do not own the articles they have published.

The National Writers Union, to which I belong, has successfully sued media that have published works they don't own in digital media —Websites, CD-ROMs, and so forth. Some publications, such as *Stamp Collector*, are requiring their freelance contributors to sign away all rights, but NWU members are refusing to work under all-rights contracts.

*Linn's* does purchase rights for on-line publication separately, and I have sold *Linn's* such rights. But *Linn's* won't allow the kind of use that Riley proposed, either, because *Linn's* makes a profit reselling articles to buyers like eBay who need "content."

I earn my living as a writer. While I appreciate the desire of readers and researchers to have every published word freely at hand without having to pay for it, I'm not prepared to become a 21st century serf for their convenience, nor are any other writers I know.

## From Ken Trettin:

Came across two more that might be of use to authors and editors. Seems we often get involved with such projects yet do not have full knowledge of what we are doing. These appear to be very useful.

The books are: *Handbook for Digital Projects*: a management tool for preservation and access found at <http://www.nedcc.org/digital/TofC.htm> in HTML at the Northeast Document Conservation Center in Andover, Mass. and *Digital Imaging for Photographic Collections* (could be

stamps, covers or exhibit pages) found at [http://www.rit.edu/~661www1/sub\\_pages/page17.pdf](http://www.rit.edu/~661www1/sub_pages/page17.pdf) in PDF at the Rochester Institute of Technology. This one can be downloaded and printed—it's 52 pages.

## From John F. Dunn, Publisher *Mekeel's & Stamps* and *U.S. Stamp News*:

As soon as the *Philatelic Communicator* arrived and I saw on the front cover Ken Lawrence's annual "Report and Analysis," I knew that my name would be mentioned in the usual negative manner to which I have become accustomed in what is not a "Report and Analysis," but an expression of personal sentiment. Take out the adjectives from what is supposed to be a Report and Analysis and you will discover that what you have is an expression of opinion based on the author's singular point of view.

This is to be expected, given Ken's lack of philatelic publishing experience. Ken is an excellent researcher, and he is an excellent writer when he sticks to his research notes, but where are his credentials as a publisher, and on what body of knowledge does he base his statements? Or, put another way, why should *PC* readers rely on what he has to say about publications and publishing? I think it is time for the Editor and the Board of the Writers' Unit to go back to his annual commentaries and decide if they are up to the standards to which a writers' journal should adhere.

Starting with a minor point, in his latest report, Ken declares himself a seer based on the statement "perhaps" *Stamp Wholesaler* "will be the next to join the list of defunct stamp periodicals." Anyone with any knowledge of the philatelic publishing business could have told you that *Stamp Wholesaler* would absolutely be shut down.

"Perhaps" Ken can be forgiven his hedging. In last year's review, when he offered his opinions on using subscription building promotions (such as Publishers' Clearing House), he stated: "...*Stamp Collector* failed to retain the ephemeral growth from such an attempt in 1997." The odd thing is that in a previous report he had stated that *Stamp Collector*'s gains appeared to be "authentic and secure." So which is it, "ephemeral" or "authentic and secure"? When you have no publishing experience or knowledge, all you can do is express opinions that "perhaps" will be accurate and "perhaps" will not.

I could go on at considerable length, but I must get back to keeping *Mekeel's & Stamps* on track and getting *U.S. Stamp News (USSN)* back in shape. Regarding *Mekeel's & Stamps*, I am proud of the fact that while Ken Lawrence can take his annual guesses at philatelic publishing reality, I took over a dying publication in 1988 (*Mekeel's*) and a dead publication in 1995 (*Stamps*, which had actually announced that it had ceased publication), and they continue to exist today despite a very limited staff and a total lack of financial

help from a well-heeled parent corporation.

As for *USSN*, I am the first to acknowledge that the publication has rarely been put out on time, and I offer no excuses for that. Since I have published the weekly on time each and every week since March 1988, there is no good reason why I cannot do the same for a bimonthly. And yet, it hasn't happened. As for Ken's assessment of our content as being "dull," I can only think that his opinion might be distorted by the fact that it is edited by John Hotchner, who bested Ken in an APS election, and that back in 1995 I declined Ken's offer to write for us for between \$200 and \$800 an article. (At a time when he had been charging \$100-\$300 to our predecessor, *U.S. Stamps & Postal History*—another publication I took over when it was about to fold.)

Fortunately, our subscribers, advertisers, editors and writers don't hold to Ken's personal assessment. And if I expressed my own feelings about our circulation being woefully inadequate despite an increase, it is only because we have come nowhere near where I wanted to be with *USSN* at this time. As for the future, Ken is the only one who has come away from my comments in a recent *USSN* as being "circumspection bordering on surrealism." The fact is that in the column to which he refers, I closed with the statement:

In raising these issues, I want to lay to rest any concern you might have: I definitely will continue the publication in one form or another. It's just that I need your opinions and suggestions on what we can do to make this a better publication for current and new subscribers.

Circumspection? Surrealism? This statement was in the same paragraph, immediately preceding my reference to the circulation figures as being woefully inadequate. I leave it to you to figure out how Ken spotted that comment, but found my discussion of the options facing us as being "circumspection bordering on surrealism," and to decide for yourself if you can rely on his "Reports and Analyses."

This takes me back to Ken's comments back in the Fourth Quarter 1999 *PC*. Discussing the fine work Lucius Jackson did with his annual reports in *Stamp Wholesaler*, and his assessment of those reports when they later were written by Jim Magruder, Ken stated: "Magurder, who also was the publisher of *Stamp Collector* was not an objective commentator." If that is the standard by which we are to measure these annual Reports & Analyses, then I leave it to the readers, the Editor, and the Board to decide if Ken Lawrence's Reports and Analyses meet that standard, and to take appropriate action if they do not. □

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A good writer always works at the impossible.

—John Steinbeck

## ►► The Quill (*continued from page 2*)

manual. I've often looked at something I've written or edited a few months after publication and thought "How in the world did I ever miss that?" A few can be overlooked, but we reach a point where too many broken rules in the written word have a negative impact.

## REVIEWS

If the quantity of books being published in the hobby is any indication, we must be doing something right. In this issue we have more reviews than I can recall in recent times. Hopefully they will be of some help to our members, not only in identifying sources of information, but some guidance for their own works. If you think this is excessive, please let us know.

## INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

Joseph Monteiro has an item on page 11 on the international exhibition in Copenhagen. Unfortunately, the entries have closed. The cutoff date for entries for internationals is frequently considerably different from our own national literature competitions. We hope to have some guidance on this subject in a future issue. In the meantime, our best suggestion is to check the A.P.S. web page mentioned in my note at the end of that article.

## THIS ISSUE

At twenty-four pages, this is the largest issue that I have been involved in. There are two reasons. First—the computer problems I had with the last issue resulted in that one being the shortest issue. Since then, thanks to some very patient authors, some of the material that I lost when my hard drive went down, has been replaced. Additionally, some of the new material that arrived bolstered this issue.

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Dane Claussen provides some very thoughtful comments in this issue's "President's Message." Worth reading for all of us. It's probably not a black and white situation, but shades of gray. For example, some back and forth from two sides of an issue will probably be complete in a short period of time in the daily or weekly press, in quarterly publications it could easily take a year. Something the readers (members in most cases) might well tire of.

Along these lines, I've been taken to task by two members for letting John Hotchner's misspellings, followed by [*sic.*], remain in his published letter. Perhaps the temptation to "prick the bubble" was just too much, particularly when John signed himself as "accredited literature judge at the APS and FIP levels." If this should create a contentious sideshow that detracts from the work that the committee on literature judging is undertaking, than my action was indeed a mistake. □

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